

THE WORLD'S BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC REVIEWS

Est 1923 · APRIL 2017

GRAMOPHONE

gramophone.co.uk

CONTEMPORARY COUNTERTENORS

For Philippe Jaroussky and today's stars of the high voice, it's an age of opportunity

PLUS

**Marc-André
Hamelin on
Rachmaninov
and Medtner**

**Verdi's Macbeth:
the best recordings**

Festival
GUIDE 2017



UNITED KINGDOM £5.75

From Bach to Chopin



13th International Music Festival CHOPIN AND HIS EUROPE 12–30 August 2017

— Over **60 concerts:** recitals, chamber and symphonic concerts; great performers, well-known and little-known masterpieces of European music from Baroque till Romanticism — One of the main aims of the **Chopin and his Europe festival in Warsaw** has been historical performance. We shall have the opportunity of hearing such well-known ensembles performing on original period instruments, as **Europa Galante, Collegium 1704, the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, Freiburger Barockorchester** and **Il Giardino Armonico** — Among soloists playing 19th-century pianos will be **Nelson Goerner, Alexei Lubimov, Andreas Staier, Alexander Melnikov, Alexey Zuyev** and **Howard Shelley** — The festival attracts well-known pianists, as Chopin Competition winners, including legendary **Martha Argerich, Garrick Ohlsson**, and younger **Yundi, Yulianna Avdeeva** or **Seong-Jin Cho**, but also **Nelson Freire, Piotr Anderszewski, Gabriela Montero, Philippe Giusiano, Jan Lisiecki** —

    /Chopin Institute

www.chopin.nifc.pl




GRAMOPHONE

SOUNDS OF AMERICA

A special eight-page section focusing on recent recordings from the US and Canada

Beethoven

Symphony No 9, 'Choral', Op 125

Rachel Nicholls *sop* **Kelley O'Connor** *mez* **John Mac Master** *ten* **Kevin Deas** *bass-bar* **Colorado Symphony Chorus and Orchestra** / **Andrew Litton**
Colorado Symphony (F)  CSDC001
(66' • DDD/DSD)
Recorded live at Boettcher Concert Hall, Denver, September 2014



A number of excellent releases document the Colorado Symphony's increasing distinction

over the past decade or so, and they play quite close to the top of their form in this Beethoven Ninth recorded live in September 2014, with Andrew Litton at the helm. Perhaps the presence of both an audience and a bank of unforgiving microphones explains why clarity rather than drama characterises the first two movements. You won't hear the more finely etched interplay and winged momentum of the Chailly/Gewandhaus traversal (Decca, A/11), nor the shattering climaxes of both Barenboim/Staatskapelle Berlin (Teldec, 4/00) and Munch/Boston editions. However, Litton lavishes care over balances, never taking lower brass punctuations for granted, and emphasising woodwind articulation (the overlapping *espressivo* sequences, for example). If his orchestra never roars, it still speaks and sometimes whispers on different levels. In the Scherzo (Litton observes the main section's first repeat but not the second), notice how the oboe/clarinet/bassoon passage at the *Presto* Trio's outset play softer on the second ending, an unwritten yet effective gesture.

Litton and his musicians find their expressive centre in an *Adagio* that gives the impression of expansive breadth, yet is actually quite straightforward and free from rhetorical lily-gilding. Close listening further reveals Litton's assiduous application of string vibrato, from minuscule doses throughout soft,

GRAMOPHONE *talks to...*

Robert Dick

The innovative composer and flautist discusses improvisation and musical exploration



How important to you is it to work with contemporary composers?

As a composer-performer, the lion's share of my performances are of my own music and improvising with fellow creative musicians. I rarely take the role of 'flautist' in the classical sense any more. But back in 1979, when Bill Hellermann wrote *Three Weeks in Cincinnati in December* for me, I was very involved in interpreting new works and felt that such collaborations were my central mission. Today my students carry on that role!

What inspired you to expand the technique and vocabulary of the flute?

To me, the traditional possibilities of the flute are frighteningly limited. In college I was struck by the huge sonic range of electric guitars and wanted an equally wide range for the flute. My studies of electronic music also blew my ears wide open and I wanted to embrace such ideas as continuous transformation of sound in my flute-playing.

Does improvisation help to develop an artist's musicianship?

Yes! Absolutely! Creativity is life itself! Through improvising, an artist is taking the same type of musical journey as a composer does. The natural result is a deepening musicianship. There is a lot of improvisation in *Three Weeks in Cincinnati in December*, on the micro-level: those whisper-tone melodies dancing around in the opening sections, for example, are represented on the page by free-hand squiggly lines, the interpretation of which clearly involves some improvisation.

Can anyone learn circular breathing?

Anyone who is willing to do the work – it's actually not all that hard. My book *Circular Breathing for the Flutist* (Omnibus: 1988) is a good place to start.

sustained passages to more liberal applications in the sweetly yet not excessively singing florid *cantabiles*.

While the assured cello/double bass recitative in the finale's introduction is undercut by occasionally tentative orchestral *tutti* punctuations, the movement's profile gains focus once the vocalists enter. The robust-toned Kevin Deas seemingly stretches out his opening recitative for ever, but the Ode to Joy's opening verses gather firm momentum (helped by heightened woodwind counterlines). John Mac Master's woolly tenor adds just the right flavour

to the March's gently boisterous, Janissary-like orchestral colour. Litton navigates the myriad tempo changes and sectional transitions with a seasoned hand; notice how he sustains the hushed excitement of the *Allegro ma non tanto*'s scurrying counterpart without pushing the tempo, while keeping the vocal soloists and chorus in ideal perspective.

The engineering reflects an honest concert hall aesthetic, including the inevitable audience coughs and shuffles, but without the tonal heft and ambient warmth of the Chailly/Gewandhaus and the underrated Sinopoli/Dresden live

ERIK SATIE:

COMPLETE WORKS FOR SOLO PIANO

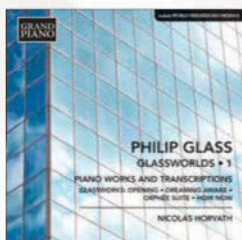
Nicolas Horvath



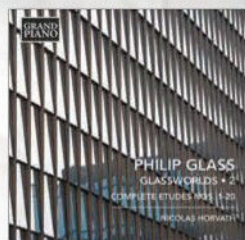
GP761 · 747313976126
AVAILABLE: 05.10.17

“...a prodigious pianist...”
- THE NEW YORKER

NICOLAS HORVATH'S PHILIP GLASS SERIES



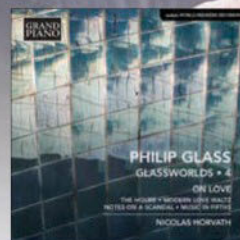
GLASSWORLDS, VOL. 1
PHILIP GLASS AND PAUL BARNES
GP677 · 747313967728
AVAILABLE: 03.10.15



GLASSWORLDS, VOL. 1
PHILIP GLASS
GP690 · 747313969029
AVAILABLE: 09.11.15



GLASSWORLDS, VOL. 3
PHILIP GLASS AND PAUL BARNES
GP691 · 747313969128
AVAILABLE: 01.08.16



GLASSWORLDS, VOL. 4
**PHILIP GLASS, NICO MUHLY,
AND MICHAEL RIESMAN**
GP692 · 747313969227
AVAILABLE: 06.10.16



GLASSWORLDS, VOL. 5
PHILIP GLASS AND PAUL SIMON
GP745 · 747313974528
AVAILABLE: 10.14.16

GRAND PIANO - THE KEY COLLECTION VARIOUS

Various

“...Hats off! Anyone who is seriously interested in piano music should check out Grand Piano for an extended test drive in their home CD player.”

- THE LISTENER



GP753-55 · 747313975327 · AVAILABLE: 03.10.17



'Close to the top of their form': the Colorado Symphony launch their new label with Beethoven's Symphony No 9, conducted by Andrew Litton

recordings, nor the perpetually potent Günter Wand/NDR reference studio version. How Litton/Colorado ultimately fares within an excessively crowded Beethoven Ninth catalogue is anyone's guess, yet the participants unquestionably do themselves proud. **Jed Distler**

Carissimi

'Eight Motets'

Audiui vocem. Christus factus est.

Dixit Dominus. Hodie Salvator mundi.

Silentium. Sustinuimus. Time-te Dominum.

Usquequo peccatores

Consortium Carissimi / Garrick Comeaux

Naxos (M) 8 573258 (66' • DDD • T/t)



Garrick Comeaux leads the Consortium Carissimi – founded in Rome in 1996 and established in Minneapolis-St Paul 10 years later – in a fourth volume for Naxos devoted to their namesake: eight motets which, in their variety of forms and textures, capture the composer's stylistic command. The performances are confident and secure, although there are some uncomfortable moments; generally, the more vibrato the group employs, the more pleasing the effect and the better the intonation.

Usquequo peccatores is an impressively dramatic 20-minute set piece for three choirs, and in his booklet-note Comeaux comments that its size and length 'have made musicologists ponder the difference between a motet and an oratorio'. This is followed by a *Dixit Dominus* that, in the space of six minutes, rolls out a lovely instrumental introduction to exquisite passages radiantly sung by sopranos Heather Cogswell and Link Kauffman which themselves express spiritually charged emotional states. In *Time-te Dominum*, a tour de force for five voices, Carissimi finds just the right blend of smoothly devotional song and lyrical ecstasy.

With no surviving autograph manuscripts, Comeaux and his Consortium crew had to prepare their performing editions from copies made by the composer's contemporaries, in locations ranging from London, Paris and Rome to Kremsmünster, Uppsala and Kroměříž. Recorded in the Church of Saint Therese in Deephaven, outside Minneapolis, the spacious, unforced sound elucidates the waves of sound Carissimi's music calls for.

Laurence Vittes

Chopin

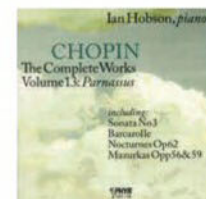
'The Complete Works, Vol 13 - Parnassus' Barcarolle, Op 60. Berceuse, Op 57. Three Mazurkas, Op 56. Three Mazurkas, Op 59.

Moderato, KKIVb/12. Two Nocturnes, Op 62.

Piano Sonata No 3, Op 58

Ian Hobson pf

Zephyr (E) Z147-16 (70' • DDD)



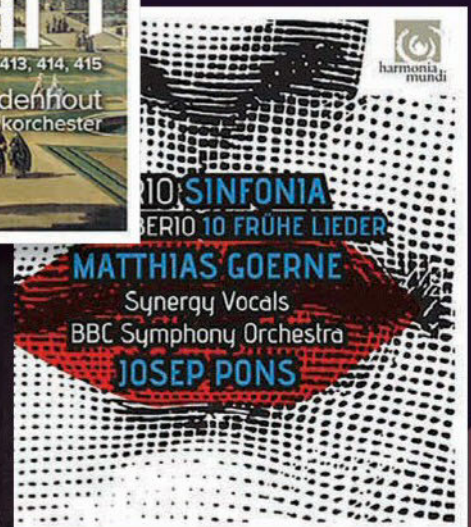
Like its 12 predecessors, Vol 13 of Ian Hobson's complete Chopin

cycle yields uneven results. The Barcarolle receives a clean and briskly forthright performance that honours the text without reading between its poetic lines. In the Op 56 Mazurkas, balances between the B major's melody and accompaniment veer in and out of focus, although the C major's left-hand drones convey just the right earthy grit. Yet, again, the C minor's lyrical yearning is undercut by Hobson's holding back on nuance. By contrast, the two Op 62 Nocturnes reveal more tenderness, breadth and assiduous transitions between sections.

While the Berceuse is well controlled and articulated, Hobson's overly loud playing falls far short of the dynamic gradations and caressingly supple phrase shaping that distinguishes classic versions from Cortot to Kempff to Perahia. The Op 59 Mazurkas also hit and miss. Hobson admirably plays up the A minor's introspective and vehement contrasts, although the A flat

primephonic

Amplify your life with harmonia mundi



Hi-Res Downloads

SAVE 20%

primephonic.com

major doesn't take vocal wing due to Hobson's overly loud left hand; however, the F sharp minor achieves welcome lightness in the skittish central section.

For all of the dryness and dynamic constriction in the first movement of the B minor Sonata, the contrapuntal clarity and strategically placed rubatos hold interest. In the Scherzo, Hobson captures the sense of surprise in the Trio's accents but the *leggiero* sections prosaically fall flat. Whatever the *Largo* lacks in tonal drama, give credit to Hobson for keeping this long movement moving ahead without sounding impatient: that's easier said than done. Hobson's sonority and expressive palette considerably open up for a flexible and often exciting *Presto non tanto*, especially in the full-throated final pages. It's like someone turned on a valve, unleashing a stream of bold, generous pianism that we don't consistently get from Hobson's recent recordings. **Jed Distler**

Harbach

'Orchestral Music, Vol 3: Portraits in Sound' Symphonies - No 7, 'O Pioneers!'; No 8, 'The Scarlet Letter'; No 9, 'Celestial Symphony'; No 10, 'Symphony for Ferguson' **London Philharmonic Orchestra / David Angus** MSR Classics © MS1614 (63' • DDD)



Barbara Harbach has nurtured a career as a harpsichordist, organist and

teacher, but she's also a prolific composer whose large canon includes, as of 2016, 10 symphonies. In this third volume of her orchestral music, subtitled 'Portraits in Sound', Symphonies Nos 7-10 are performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under David Angus.

Each of the symphonies has a moniker that evokes the descriptive nature of Harbach's concise, three-movement essays. No 7 is called *O Pioneers!* after the Harbach opera from which the music is drawn. The central characters of Hester, Chillingworth and Dimmesdale from Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* are depicted in Symphony No 8, while Symphony No 9 (*Celestial Symphony*) is derived from a Harbach silent-movie score and Symphony No 10 (*Symphony for Ferguson*) commemorates the 2014 killing and riots in Ferguson, Missouri.

Harbach's writing hearkens back to Romanticism, with sweeping lyricism, richly layered lines and harmonies unfolding in a confident tonal style.

These symphonies are akin to mini-tone poems, full of thematic material that provides dramatic focus and summons an array of atmospheres and emotional states. In Symphony No 10 Harbach is especially effective employing beloved spirituals and popular tunes (including WC Handy's 'St Louis Blues') to drive home messages of courage and tolerance.

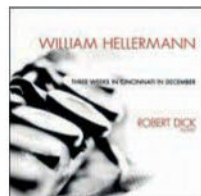
The cinematic nature of the symphonies receives lavish treatment by Angus and the London Philharmonic, who illuminate every detail in these skilfully crafted scores. Harbach's music could hardly be better served. **Donald Rosenberg**

Hellermann

Three Weeks in Cincinnati in December

Robert Dick //

New World © NW80789-2 (52' • DDD)



Never mind that the title of William Hellermann's *Three Weeks in Cincinnati*

in December has nothing to do with the music itself. The solo piece is a tour de force for Robert Dick, a champion of extended flute techniques, and mesmerising in its multiplicity of other-worldly sonorities.

Hellermann composed the piece in the late 1970s as the last of four works focusing on different instrumental techniques. Knowing how far Dick had expanded the vocabulary for flute, the composer created a nearly-52-minute score that challenged the soloist to perform without pausing to take breaths. The feat is made possible through the art of circular breathing, wherein the player draws air in through the nose while continuing to play in an uninterrupted flow of sounds. In this case, those sounds include multiphonics, generating several notes at once, which are coloured by what the composer terms 'a continuous diaphragm tremolo'.

All of this might be mere technical trickery were it not for the fact that the music works a spell by subtly shifting to notes around a central E natural and building a series of beguiling phrases. It takes a while for these transformations to occur, but once they begin to take shape, the piece draws you in as if it were a benevolent Pied Piper.

In his elegant and understated way, Dick manages to draw attention not to his circular-breathing virtuosity but to the bewitching narrative Hellermann conjured, for however long he spent in whichever city in whatever month. **Donald Rosenberg**

'Discoveries'

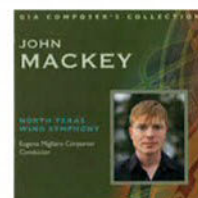
Corigliano Elegy Daugherty Rio Grande Dooley
Masks and Machines Feld Divertimento Mackey
Sasparilla Nagao The Planets for Trouvère - The Earth A Schoenberg American Symphony
North Texas Wind Symphony /
Eugene Migliari Corporon
GIA Wind Works © CD1005 (77' • DDD)

'Inventions'

Broughton In the World of Spirits Daugherty
Winter Dreams Mackey The Ringmaster's
March. Wine-Dark Sea J Williams For the
President's Own Wolfgang Three Short Stories
North Texas Wind Symphony /
Eugene Migliari Corporon
GIA Wind Works © CD1004 (75' • DDD)

J Mackey

Aurora Awakes. Foundry. The Frozen Cathedral.
High Wire^a. Hymn to a Blue Hour. Kingfishers
Catch Fire. (Redacted). Redline Tango^a. The
Ringmaster's March. Sasparilla. Sheltering Sky.
Strange Humors^a. Undertow. Wine-Dark Sea
North Texas Wind Symphony /
Eugene Migliari Corporon; ^aShowa
Wind Symphony / Shintaro Fukumoto
GIA Wind Works © ② CD996 (133' • DDD)



The American concert band has a sound distinctively its own and a virtuosity that has attracted

mainstream composers since the 1950s: Hindemith (B flat Symphony, 1951), Roy Harris and Morton Gould (sesquicentennial *West Point* Symphonies, 1952), Vincent Persichetti, whose 14 band works include his Sixth Symphony (1956), to name a few. GIA's three releases contain almost exclusively 21st-century compositions – only Corigliano's *Elegy* (1965 – from an off-Broadway musical about Helen of Troy), given here in Christopher Anderson's 2012 arrangement, and Jindřich Feld's delightful *Divertimento* (2000) predate our millennium.

The 'Discoveries' disc centres on Adam Schoenberg's popular *American Symphony* (2011, given here in Master Sergeant Donald Patterson's virtuoso 2014 transcription for the US President's Marine Band) which, for all the razzmatazz of the concluding 'Stars, Stripes and Celebrations', has many passages of subtle gravity and

innova recordings



innova is the label of the american composers forum



MIYA MASAOKA > TRIANGLE OF RESISTANCE
 LAWRENCE AXELROD > THE HEART REVIVED
 MARI KIMURA > VOYAGE APOLLONIAN
 THE CROSSING > SEVEN RESPONSES
 TIMOTHY DUNNE > METAPHRASE
 YUKI NUMATA RESNICK > FOR KO
 ARCOMUSICAL > MEIA-MEIA
 ROSS FELLER > X/WINDS
 HUANG RUO > RED RAIN
 AREON FLUTES > THRIVE
 DANA JESSEN > CARVE

www.innova.com

New from VAI

ALBERTO REYES



BACH-BUSONI • CHOPIN • FRANCK • SCHUMANN

BACH-BUSONI: Chaconne in D minor

FRANCK: Prelude, Chorale and Fugue

CHOPIN: Polonaise-Fantaisie, Op. 61

SCHUMANN: Sonata No. 2 in G minor, Op. 22

VAIA 1284

"...showed a command of the large-scale integration of structure which was indeed profound,... allied to a comprehensive technique that, frankly, has everything: warmth and depth of tone, clarity and a superb colour range, precision and range of dynamics from the fullest sound to the most finely-balanced nuance – all subsumed in a reading of compelling artistry."

—Robert Matthew-Walker, *Classical Source* (reviewing Alberto Reyes at Cadogan Hall, London, October 2014) • for more information: www.albertoreyes.com

ALSO AVAILABLE:



CHOPIN

Piano Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35

Piano Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58

Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52

Fantasy in F minor, Op. 49

Barcarolle, Op. 60

VAIA 1271-2



SCHUMANN

Kinderszenen, Op. 15

Kreisleriana, Op. 16

Fantasy in C, Op. 17

VAIA 1273-2

Available in the UK from Discovery Records Ltd.
www.discovery-records.com • +44 (0)1380 728000

Available in the US from



VIDEO ARTISTS INTERNATIONAL - VAI AUDIO
www.vaimusic.com • 1-914-769-3691

instrumental finesse. Feld's *Divertimento* and Paul Dooley's engaging multi-movement *Masks and Machines* (2015) are, with Michael Daugherty's *Rio Grande* (2015 – no connection to Constant Lambert), the pick of this disc. There is much to enjoy in Jun Nagao's 2013 mash-up of *The Planets* (originally for saxophone quartet) and John Mackey's *Sasparilla* (2005), with its drunken bassoons suggesting there's more to root beer than this reviewer supposed.

Mackey (a student of Corigliano and Erb, no relation to Steven Mackey) dominates 'Inventions', the major work being his symphony *Wine-Dark Sea* (2014). Based on three key episodes in Homer's *Odyssey*, it is a double-edged, not altogether sympathetic portrait of Odysseus. The central 'Immortal Thread, So Weak' (dealing with Calypso's desertion) is beautifully composed, as is the concluding 'The Attention of Souls', a *Totentanz* set in Hades. *The Ringmaster's March* (the finale to a larger suite omitted here) is trifling by comparison, a Shostakovich-like homage to the circus. Daugherty's *Winter Dreams* (2015) is of greater moment, a touching, well-made tribute to the artist Grant Wood, and his famous painting *American Gothic*. Even finer is Bruce Broughton's *In the World of Spirits* (2011), a work of real poetry. Broughton is well known as a composer for film and TV, as are John Williams – his *For the President's Own* (2013) makes a breezy concert opener – and Austrian-born Gernot Wolfgang, whose *Three Short Stories* (2001, arrangements of a viola-and-piano duo) inhabit the world of Leonard Bernstein and Lalo Schiffrin in a vibrant musical shindig.

The Mackey performances are recycled in GIA's two-CD set, which provides a highly listenable composer portrait. It is hard not to be overwhelmed by the sheer force of Mackey's faster writing, especially when played with such verve as in *High Wire* (2012; another brief, but more exhilarating, circus tribute), *Redline Tango* (2005, with its darker shades of Piazzolla), *Undertow* (2008) and the marvellous *Kingfishers Catch Fire* (2007), the thrilling finale of which really does ignite. *Foundry* (2011) is fun but seems a tad underpowered despite its dozen percussionists. Mackey's more serious side surfaces in *Hymn to a Blue Hour* (2010), *Sheltering Sky* (2012), (*Redacted*) (2013) and *Kingfishers'* first panel, all very contrasted, slower-paced works. Different again are *Strange Humours* (2006), transcribed from an original for string quartet and djembe, the incandescent *Aurora Awakes* (2009), built on material from U2 and Holst's First Suite, and *The Frozen Cathedral* (2012), a mellifluous scherzo-cum-tone poem



'A jubilant display of brass splendour': the American Brass Quintet shine in their new album, 'Perspectives'

depicting Mount McKinley in Alaska. Overall, Mackey's polyglot style at its best occasionally reminds me of McPhee, Mennin, Schuman and the brass works of Robert Simpson – high praise indeed.

It might seem like an afterthought to finally mention the North Texas Wind Symphony, who under Eugene Migliaro Corporon's manifestly inspiring direction play throughout with unstinting verve, commitment and a thrilling virtuosity that puts many a more famous ensemble to shame. The Showa Wind Symphony's three live performances directed by Shintaro Fukumoto show Mackey has an international reach and that Japanese concert band standards are also very high. GIA's terrific sound helps make all three issues compelling listening, with many real gems and no turkeys. Buy and enjoy! **Guy Rickards**

'Perspectives'

Currier Cadence, Fugue, Fade

Ewazen *Canticum honoris amicorum*^a

Greenberg Brass Quintet Paterson Shine

American Brass Quintet with

^aRaymond Mase *tpt* ^aDavid Wakefield *hn*

^aJustin Waller *tbn* ^aJJ Cooper *btbn*

Summit © DCD692 (53' • DDD)



The American Brass Quintet has gone through many changes of personnel over the decades, but the high quality of the artistry and devotion to living composers remain firmly in place. On this new recording, 'Perspectives', the ensemble take up music by four composers who bring individual

takes to the complement of two trumpets, horn, trombone and bass trombone (not tuba, as in many brass quintets).

In the disc's final piece, Eric Ewazen's nonet *Canticum honoris amicorum*, the Quintet welcome two former members and two other colleagues in this 'song honouring friends'. It is a jubilant display of brass splendour marked by swirling figures, layered textures and shifting colours. The preceding works provide a snapshot of the Quintet's versatility and gleaming sense of sonority. The four movements of Robert Paterson's *Shine* are evocative portraits of metals – brass, mercury, gold and steel – as depicted in contrasting atmospheres and instrumental techniques, including the deft use of mutes. Jay Greenberg's Brass Quintet combines complex interactions and vivid solos in extreme ranges through writing of chattering and ominous personality.

In *Cadence, Fugue, Fade* Sebastian Currier hearkens back to music of distant centuries as viewed through a keen modern prism. Harmonic pungencies in the opening cadences lead to an extended, boldly characterised fugue and final section abounding in compelling changes of mood and mysterious gestures.

Even with two new players recently in place, the American musicians bring utmost cohesion, balance and expressivity to each of the scores they perform with ear-catching intensity and finesse. **Donald Rosenberg**

primephonic

Amplify your life with the sounds from America and around the world at primephonic.com. For life on an epic scale.

GRAMOPHONE

Choose the right
subscription for you

- THE GRAMOPHONE CLUB
 - PRINT EDITION
 - DIGITAL CLUB
 - DIGITAL EDITION
 - REVIEWS DATABASE



THE WORLD'S LEADING CLASSICAL MUSIC REVIEWS MAGAZINE

EXPAND YOUR COLLECTION

With the world's most authoritative classical music reviews section, written by our unrivalled, international and objective panel of expert reviewers

INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS

We are devoted to exploring the artists stamping their mark on recording today, with captivating features and exclusive interviews

COMPOSER PROFILES

We celebrate composers both past and present, providing you with a unique perspective on the lives and work of the giants of the classical music world

SOUNDS OF AMERICA

Every issue includes a special eight-page section focusing on exciting new releases from North American artists and labels

Visit www.magsubscriptions.com/gramophone
or call +44 (0)1722 716997

Building a bright future for classical music

Great public architecture generally expresses eloquently the society which builds it. For much of modern history, it was about the glorification of God. In more recent centuries, politics and power became the stronger focus: think of the mercantile grandeur of the Low Countries, the triumphant classical confidence of Paris, or, in Victorian Britain, of the extraordinary expressions of civic pride that are the industrial powerhouses of Manchester and Birmingham. In the post-war period, a more egalitarian ethos led to cultural complexes coming to express a city's sense of self. This was the age of the Royal Festival Hall, Lincoln Center and Finlandia Hall. But more recently, at a time when classical music feels forced to fight its corner for coverage, it seems remarkable – though gratifying – that the concert hall continues to occupy the pinnacle of public architectural ambition.

This year's Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, last year's Philharmonie de Paris, and, prior to that, countless examples from Singapore to Gateshead – new concert halls are among the most creative, compelling and prominent public buildings being produced today. Most are now built with excellent acoustics. Openness to new audiences is invariably a key consideration. And with the growth in live-streaming, concert venues throughout the world are playing an ever-increasing role in how all of us experience music-making, wherever we are. They serve as bold beacons, both for music and for a world which values art and wants to ensure that the past is part of the present, and that the future is nurtured with confidence.



But there's another kind of building that excites me even more, because its faith in the future is even more explicit: that of educational institutions. This month I visited Birmingham for a hard-hat tour of the new Conservatoire building. Sited in a district full of new academic buildings, the £57m facility will feature a 500-seat concert hall, two smaller venues, 100 practice and rehearsal rooms, an organ studio and – to cheer every *Gramophone* reader – seven recording studios. It may not loom as large over the skyline as the epic Elbphilharmonie, but – as with all education institutions – its legacy, in terms of the seeds it sows, may potentially outlive anything bricks can build. Under Principal Julian Lloyd Webber's leadership, the new Birmingham Conservatoire promises a fantastic future for the 131-year old institution and, more importantly, for the students destined to first cross its threshold in September. We wish it well.

And, speaking of fantastic futures, perhaps you'll allow me to reflect on our own recent success. According to official figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulation, *Gramophone* increased its circulation by 10 per cent in 2016, driven largely by a massive increase in subscriptions to our digital edition. In fact, our digital edition is now the highest-selling UK digital music magazine, of any musical genre. New concert halls, a new conservatoire and a growing *Gramophone* circulation – it all stems from the same thirst for classical music. So may I thank you all for your committed support – of *Gramophone*, yes, but most importantly, of this extraordinary art form of ours.

martin.cullingford@markallengroup.com

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS



'The most beautiful countertenor voices always had the power to stir the emotions,' says author of

our cover story **LINDSAY KEMP**.

'But now we have a generation who can dazzle with power and virtuosity too. I was fascinated to hear the stories of three of today's new countertenor stars.'



'Marc-André Hamelin is the only musician I know who can talk about Schubert in one breath, Feinberg

in the next and then wax lyrical about Morton Feldman,' says **HARRIET SMITH**, who interviews the pianist this issue. 'He's a musical encyclopedia, but it's his simple enthusiasm that's so engaging.'



'Hearing all the recordings of *Macbeth*, I was struck by how much of an advance in music theatre the

piece represented, not just for Verdi but for the 19th century as a whole,' says **MIKE ASHMAN**, who writes this month's Collection on the opera. 'It set new standards for translating a play to the lyric stage.'

Gramophone, which has been serving the classical music world since 1923, is first and foremost a monthly review magazine, delivered today in both print and digital formats. It boasts an eminent and knowledgeable panel of experts, which reviews the full range of classical music recordings. Its reviews are completely independent. In addition to reviews, its interviews and features help readers to explore in greater depth the recordings that the magazine covers, as well as offer insight into the work of composers and performers. It is *the* magazine for the classical record collector, as well as for the enthusiast starting a voyage of discovery.

THE REVIEWERS Andrew Achenbach • David Allen • Nalen Anthoni • Tim Ashley • Mike Ashman • Richard Bratby • Edward Breen • Liam Cagney • Philip Clark • Alexandra Coghlan • Rob Cowan (consultant reviewer) • Jeremy Dibble • Peter Dickinson • Jed Distler • Adrian Edwards • Richard Fairman • David Fallows • David Fanning • Andrew Farach-Colton • Iain Fenlon • Neil Fisher • Fabrice Fitch • Jonathan Freeman-Attwood • Charlotte Gardner • Caroline Gill • David Gutman • Christian Hoskins • Lindsay Kemp • Philip Kennicott • Richard Lawrence • Andrew Mellor • Kate Molleson • Ivan Moody • Bryce Morrison • Hannah Nepil • Jeremy Nicholas • Christopher Nickol • Geoffrey Norris • Richard Osborne • Stephen Plaistow • Mark Pullinger • Peter Quantrell • Guy Rickards • Malcolm Riley • Marc Rochester • Patrick Rucker • Julie Anne Sadie • Edward Seckerson • Hugo Shirley • Pwyll ap Siôn • Harriet Smith • David Patrick Stearns • David Threasher • David Vickers • John Warrack • Richard Whitehouse • Arnold Whittall • Richard Wigmore • William Yeoman

CONTENTS

Volume 94 Number 1147

EDITORIAL

Phone 020 7738 5454 **Fax** 020 7733 2325
email gramophone@markallengroup.com
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER Martin Cullingford
DEPUTY EDITOR Sarah Kirkup / 020 7501 6365
REVIEWS EDITOR Tim Parry / 020 7501 6367
ONLINE CONTENT EDITOR James McCarthy / 020 7501 6366
SUB-EDITOR David Thresher / 020 7501 6370
SUB-EDITOR Marija Đurić Speare
ART DIRECTOR Dinah Lone / 020 7501 6689
PICTURE EDITOR Sunita Sharma-Gibson / 020 7501 6369
AUDIO EDITOR Andrew Everard
EDITORIAL ADMINISTRATOR Libby McPhee
LIBRARIAN Richard Farr
THANKS TO Hannah Nepil and Charlotte Gardner
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF James Jolly

ADVERTISING

Phone 020 7738 5454 **Fax** 020 7733 2325
email gramophoneads@markallengroup.com
COMMERCIAL MANAGER
 Esther Zuke / 020 7501 6368
SALES EXECUTIVE
 Simon Davies / 020 7501 6373

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BACK ISSUES

0800 137201 (UK) +44 (0)1722 716997 (overseas)
 subscriptions@markallengroup.com

PUBLISHING

Phone 020 7738 5454
HEAD OF MARKETING AND DIGITAL STRATEGY Luca Da Re / 020 7501 6362
MARKETING MANAGER Edward Craggs / 020 7501 6384
DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Matthew Cianfarani
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR Richard Hamshire / 01722 716997
PRODUCTION MANAGER Jon Redmayne
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR Sally Boettcher / 01722 716997
SUBSCRIPTIONS MANAGER Chris Hoskins / 01722 716997
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Martin Cullingford
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Paul Geoghegan
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Ben Allen
CHAIRMAN Mark Allen



A MARK ALLEN GROUP COMPANY
 www.markallengroup.com

GRAMOPHONE is published by
 MA Music Leisure & Travel Ltd, St Jude's Church,
 Dulwich Road, London SE24 0PB, United Kingdom.
gramophone.co.uk
email gramophone@markallengroup.com or
subscriptions@markallengroup.com
 ISSN 0017-310X.

The April issue of *Gramophone* is on sale from March 29; the May issue will be on sale from April 26 (both UK). Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of statements in this magazine but we cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions, or for matters arising from clerical or printers' errors, or an advertiser not completing his contract. Regarding concert listings, all information is correct at the time of going to press. Letters to the editor requiring a personal reply should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. We have made every effort to secure permission to use copyright material. Where material has been used inadvertently or we have been unable to trace the copyright owner, acknowledgement will be made in a future issue.

UK subscription rate £64.
 Printed in England by Southernprint.

North American edition (ISSN 0017-310X):
Gramophone, USPS 881080, is published monthly with an additional issue in September by MA Music Leisure & Travel Ltd, St Jude's Church, Dulwich Road, London SE24 0PB, United Kingdom. The US annual subscription price is \$89. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named Air Business, c/o Worldnet Shipping Inc., 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Jamaica NY 11431. US Postmaster: Send address changes to *Gramophone*, Worldnet Shipping Inc. (see above). Subscription records are maintained at MA Music Leisure & Travel Ltd, Unit A Buildings 1-5, Dinton Business Park, Catherine Ford Road, Dinton, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP3 5HZ, UK. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent.

© MA Music Leisure & Travel Ltd, 2017. All rights reserved. No part of the *Gramophone* may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without prior written permission of the Publishing Director. The views expressed do not necessarily represent those of the editor or *Gramophone*. Advertisements in the journal do not imply endorsement of the products or services advertised.



EDITOR'S CHOICE 7

The 12 most highly recommended recordings of the month

FOR THE RECORD 8

The latest classical music news

Reviews

RECORDING OF THE MONTH 44

A deeply moving performance of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* conducted by Sir John Eliot Gardiner, and recorded live in Pisa Cathedral

ORCHESTRAL 46

A double dose of Blunier's Beethoven; concertos by Nilsson and Skog; British Tone Poems, Vol 1

CHAMBER 66

Alwyn from the Tippett Quartet; the Wanderer Trio's Dvořák; Farina from Leila Schayegh

INSTRUMENTAL 76

Julien Brocal plays Chopin's Preludes; dazzling Liszt from Chiyan Wong; David Goode's Reger

VOCAL 90

Bach Passions; Monteverdi madrigals; Sullivan songs; the Orlando Consort chart the rise of English polyphony

REISSUES 104

Box-sets celebrating Mstislav Rostropovich, Pierre Fournier and pianist Sviatoslav Richter

OPERA 110

Francesca Caccini's battle of two sorceresses; Mozart's *Tito*; Wagner's early *Das Liebesverbot*

JAZZ & WORLD MUSIC 118

Expand your listening with recommendations from *Gramophone's* sister titles *Jazzwise* and *Songlines*

REPLAY 120

Toscanini caught live in Brahms and Beethoven, and a celebration of Australia's star singers

BOOKS 122

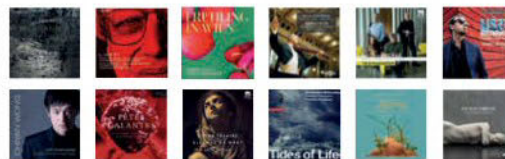
A portrait of Mahler and Strauss, and the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonics during the Third Reich

GRAMOPHONE COLLECTION 128

Verdi's dramatic Shakespearean opera *Macbeth*: which recordings should you own?

NEW RELEASES 150

REVIEWS INDEX 152



Features

TODAY'S COUNTERTENORS 10

Max Emanuel Cencic, Franco Fagioli and our cover artist Philippe Jaroussky on why today is a golden age for the countertenor singer

MARC-ANDRÉ HAMELIN 16

The acclaimed pianist talks about his commitment to championing lesser-known composers, and his new disc of Medtner and Rachmaninov

FESTIVAL GUIDE 2017 20

From remote chamber festivals to major ensembles and events, we bring you everything you need to plan your summer concert-going

THE MUSICIAN & THE SCORE 64

Jonathan Plowright explores Brahms's *Four Ballades* ahead of his new disc for BIS

ICONS 74

A celebration of Dinu Lipatti, one of the 20th century's most gifted pianists

CONTEMPORARY COMPOSERS 88

One of the UK's most important composers, George Benjamin is our focus this month

MUSICAL CONNECTIONS 119

Two listening journeys sparked by our cover story, including countertenors through the years

CLASSICS RECONSIDERED 124

Brahms's Piano Quintet with Maurizio Pollini and the Quartetto Italiano: how does it fare today?

THE SPECIALIST'S GUIDE 126

Ten brilliant Romantic violin concertos that should be much better known than they are

PERFORMANCES & EVENTS 134

The best live music on radio and online

HIGH FIDELITY 137

The latest developments in audio equipment

LETTERS & OBITUARIES 146

Swedish tenor Nicolai Gedda remembered

MY MUSIC 154

The musical life of Rosie Millard, journalist, author and Chair of Hull UK City of Culture



PIOTR ANDERSZEWSKI
MOZART AND SCHUMANN
FANTAISIES

"I can hear in the music of both composers a similarity in their processes of giving physical form to their inspirations."

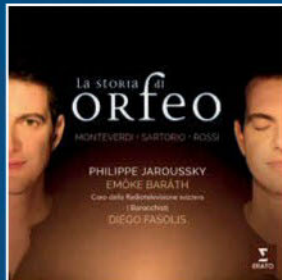
– Piotr Anderszewski



JEAN RONDEAU
DYNASTIE: BACH CONCERTOS

"...Rondeau is one of the most natural performers one is likely to hear on a classical music stage these days."

– The Washington Post



PHILIPPE JAROUSSKY
LA STORIA DI ORFEO

Philippe Jaroussky in a unique exploration of three key 17th-century operas – a long-held dream to portray the mythic Orpheus



BEATRICE RANA
BACH: GOLDBERG VARIATIONS

"Beware! I put on this disc and found myself barely able to move for the 78 minutes of Bach's masterpiece, so familiar yet suddenly so new."

A supremely intelligent reading."
– The Sunday Times



MIN KYUM
GONE – THE ALBUM

Companion album to the new Penguin book, Min Kim's: Gone traces the story of a lost Stradivarius and its career changing consequences.



www.warnerclassics.com

Marketed and distributed by Warner Music UK Ltd.



PRESTO
CLASSICAL

amazon.co.uk

Welcome to the Dog & Trumpet!

First established as a recorded music trademark after an original painting by Francis Barraud, the Dog & Trumpet remains synonymous with quality music, celebrated artists and gifted composers.

Dog & Trumpet celebrates music with pedigree

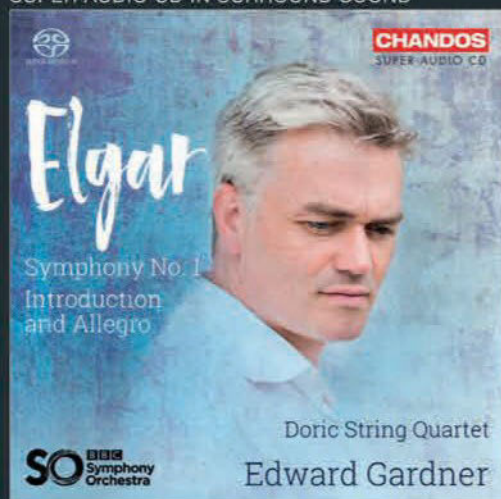
Discover more:
Follow Nipper online



@dogandtrumpet



SUPER AUDIO CD IN SURROUND SOUND



Disc of the Month

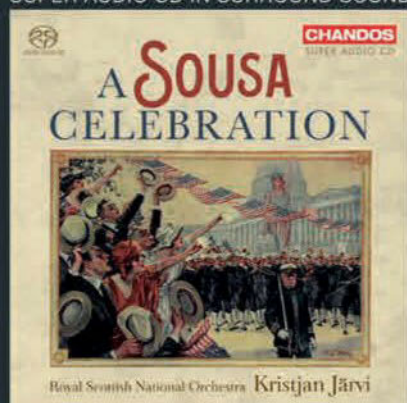
Elgar: Introduction and Allegro / Symphony No. 1

Doric String Quartet | BBC Symphony Orchestra | Edward Gardner

This surround-sound recording brings together some of Chandos' finest exclusive British artists for the first time in subtle, passionate accounts of two Elgar masterpieces. The Doric String Quartet – highly praised for its series of Haydn and Schubert quartets – joins strings from the BBC SO under Edward Gardner in the *Introduction and Allegro*, while the full orchestra appears in the much-loved *Symphony No. 1*.

CHSA 5181

SUPER AUDIO CD IN SURROUND SOUND



A Sousa Celebration

Royal Scottish National Orchestra
Kristjan Järvi

Kristjan Järvi exploits the style and panache of the RSNO in a festive programme of works by Sousa, the American 'March King'. Includes such famous pieces as *The Stars & Stripes Forever* (National March of the USA) and *The Liberty Bell* (theme tune for Monty Python's *Flying Circus*). A celebration enhanced by brightly coloured sound captured in surround-sound.

CHSA 5182



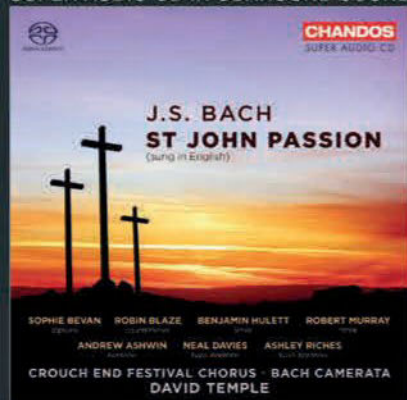
Franck / Fauré Szymanowski Chamber Works

Tasmin Little | Piers Lane

The indefatigable duo returns with a late-romantic programme of passionate, intimate works. Together, they reveal the magic of the folk-like yet technically demanding *Romance*, *Violin Sonata*, and *Notturmo e Tarantella* by Szymanowski, as well as Franck's *Violin Sonata* and Fauré's *Romance*.

CHAN 10938

SUPER AUDIO CD IN SURROUND SOUND



Bach:

St John Passion (in English)

Soloists | Crouch End Festival Chorus | Bach Camerata
David Temple

The 100 voices of CEFC lend precision and power to this performance alongside the Bach Camerata, one of the finest UK baroque orchestras, under the inspired direction of David Temple and joined by a superb array of soloists.

CHAN 10939

MAY 2017 RELEASES



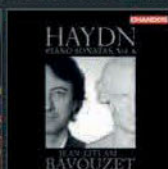
CHAN 0818
Corelli
Music by Montanari Mossi | Valentini



CHAN 10937
Strauss in St Petersburg



CHAN 10941
Antheil



CHAN 10942
Haydn
Piano Sonatas, Vol. 6

Early digital release at www.chandos.net: MP3, lossless, studio, surround

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE
for CDs, downloads and much more

www.chandos.net
MP3 • lossless • studio • surround

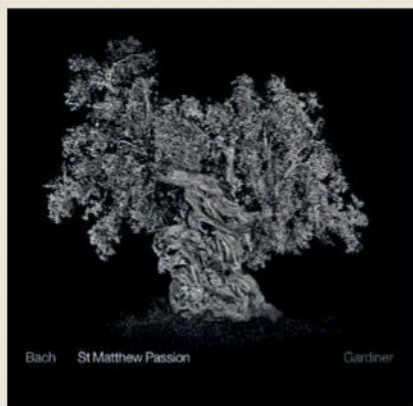
STAY IN THE KNOW
New releases • Reviews • Special offers • Artist features

GRAMOPHONE *Editor's choice*

Martin Cullingford's pick of the finest recordings from this month's reviews

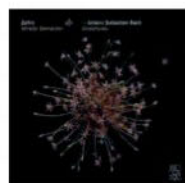


RECORDING OF THE MONTH



JS BACH
St Matthew Passion
Monteverdi Choir;
English Baroque
Soloists / Sir John
Eliot Gardiner
SDG
► **LINDSAY KEMP'S
REVIEW IS ON
PAGE 44**

Sir John Eliot Gardiner's leadership and vision – from his use of primarily choir soloists to his conveying of the work's overall journey – make for an immensely moving St Matthew Passion.



JS BACH
Orchestral Suites
Zefiro /
Alfredo Bernardini *ob*
Arcana
These Bach overtures

grab the listener's attention with a thrilling theatricality and sense of joyful drama, all wonderfully directed by Alfredo Bernardini

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 46**



R STRAUSS
Tone Poems, Vol 5
SWR Symphony Orchestra,
Baden-Baden and Freiburg
/ François-Xavier Roth
SWR Music

Dramatic detail, effervescent energy and excellent sound make this a super addition to François-Xavier Roth's SWR Symphony Orchestra Strauss series.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 58**



D MATTHEWS
Complete Piano Trios
Leonore Piano Trio
Toccata Classics
These are imaginative and captivating

contemporary chamber works. Lyrical lines are played with a poignancy and delicacy by an ensemble who thoroughly believe in the music.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 70**



MOZART
Violin Sonatas, Vol 3
Alina Ibragimova *vn*
Cédric Tiberghien *pf*
Hyperion
This is developing

into a delightful series – Vol 3 sees Alina Ibragimova and Cédric Tiberghien find immense charm and character in these sonatas from across Mozart's life.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 70**



JS BACH
Goldberg Variations
Beatrice Rana *pf*
Warner Classics
Another new
Goldbergs set, from

another young pianist? Yes, and a really remarkable one it is too. Beatrice Rana's interpretation of the familiar work is fresh, fun and reflective in turn.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 76**



BRAHMS 'The Complete Piano Music, Vol 4'
Jonathan Plowright *pf*
BIS
Jonathan Plowright continues his Brahms

series in impressive style – virtuosity and thoughtfulness both to the fore. You can also read his reflections on the *Ballades* in 'The Musician and the Score' on page 64

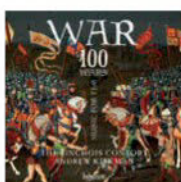
► **REVIEW ON PAGE 77**



GLASS Études
Víkingur Ólafsson *pf*
DG
Philip Glass's piano music moves between a feeling

of otherworldliness and an intense inwardness, two facets which Icelandic pianist Víkingur Ólafsson's deeply musical playing seems to embody perfectly.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 80**



'MUSIC FOR THE 100 YEARS' WAR'
The Binchois Consort /
Andrew Kirkman
Hyperion
The excellent

presentation – both in terms of the Binchois Consort's very fine performance and the album's thoughtful packaging – vividly conjure a historical period.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 102**



MOZART Arias
Anett Fritsch *sop*
Munich Radio Orchestra /
Alessandro De Marchi
Orfeo

Fully formed characters seems to leap straight out of this delightful recital of Mozart arias, all convincingly portrayed by the German soprano Anett Fritsch.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 113**



DVD/BLU-RAY
PUCCINI Turandot
Soloists; Orchestra of La Scala, Milan / Riccardo Chailly
Decca
Riccardo Chailly and his La Scala forces feature twice – and excellently – in this issue (see also Decca's 'Overtures, Preludes and Intermezzi', page 62); this Turandot is great testimony to his work in Milan.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 115**



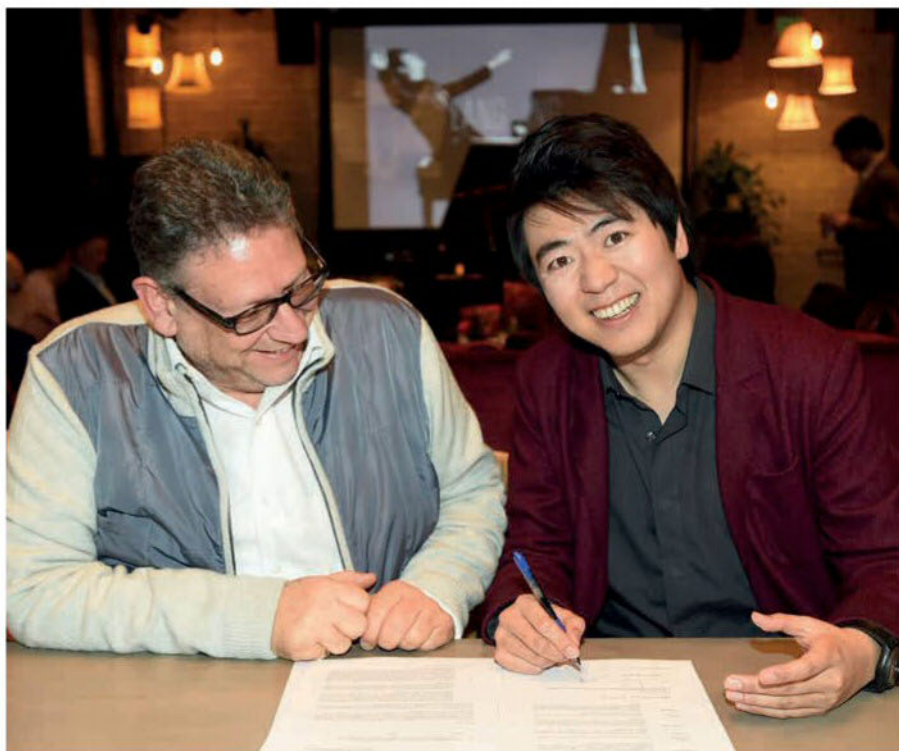
REISSUE/ARCHIVE
'FROM MELBA TO SUTHERLAND'
Eloquence
80 singers in all: a great celebration of a country's contribution to the art of opera.

► **REVIEW ON PAGE 121**



Listen to many of the Editor's Choice recordings online at **qobuz.com**

FOR THE RECORD



Lang Lang signs on the dotted line, witnessed by chairman and CEO of Universal Music Group Sir Lucian Grainge

Lang Lang returns to Universal following seven years with Sony

After seven years with Sony Music, Lang Lang has returned to Universal Music Group and Deutsche Grammophon, the label he originally signed to in 2003 aged 20.

His first recording for UMG will be 'The Piano Book', an album of educational solo piano works connected to the Lang Lang Piano Method. There are also plans for a new recording of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* for DG.

Sir Lucian Grainge, chairman and CEO of UMG, said: 'Lang Lang is that exceptionally rare talent who combines artistic excellence and innovative entrepreneurship to deliver exciting new music and experiences to his millions and millions of fans around the world. As someone whom I admire artistically and personally, I'm thrilled that UMG will contribute to the next chapter in Lang Lang's already distinguished career.'

Lang Lang made several recordings with Sony. Perhaps the most impressive was 'Live in Vienna', which was named an Editor's Choice in 2010. Of that recording, *Gramophone's* Bryce Morrison wrote: 'Let me say at once

that the youthful excess and rampant exhibitionism of much of Lang Lang's earliest work is today transformed into playing which for the greater part is as stylish and perceptive as it is brilliant... doubting Thomases should take time off to listen to a major talent.'

Another noteworthy recording for Sony was Lang Lang's collaboration with Nikolaus Harnoncourt in Mozart's concertos, the subject of our cover story in September 2014. In reviewing it in the following issue, David Threasher wrote: 'He comes into his own in the cadenzas. His touch is breathtakingly beautiful and, let off the leash, he is able to spin the same spells that make certain parts of his live performances so mesmerising.'

Lang Lang himself was delighted to return to UMG: 'When I met Lucian and his team, I was amazed by their open-mindedness and passion for innovation,' he said. 'This is exactly the spirit we need to promote classical music in the 21st century. My dream has always been to share music with as many people as possible, and I can't wait to start working with the Universal teams around the world.'

St Paul's Cathedral appoints its first female choir member

London's St Paul's Cathedral has appointed the first female full member of its cathedral choir in its 1000 year history. Joining the choir's group of professional adult singers, Carris Jones has been given the post of Alto Vicar Choral.

Of the appointment, Jones said: 'I am thrilled to be appointed as a Vicar Choral at St Paul's Cathedral, and feel incredibly lucky to join a group of such friendly and talented musicians. I have long admired the cathedral as an

IN THE STUDIO

Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* from Alice Coote and Marc Albrecht

The British mezzo-soprano Alice Coote, who was shortlisted for a *Gramophone* Award in the solo vocal category last year, has recorded Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*, *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and *Rückert-Lieder* with the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Marc Albrecht. She previously recorded Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the same forces in 2013 and, as *Gramophone's* David Gutman noted in his review, 'Coote takes Dame Janet Baker's rapt introspection to a new level.' The sessions for the new disc took place in Amsterdam in November 2015 and June 2016, and the SACD recording is due for release on Pentatone in June. Look out for a 'Musician and Score' in the July issue.

Angela Gheorghiu announces a new album of verismo arias

Angela Gheorghiu has revealed that she will be releasing a new album of *verismo* arias later this year. Called 'Eternamente', it will be her first new opera recital album for six years.

Alain Lanceron, president of Warner Classics & Erato, said: 'Angela Gheorghiu had not recorded a recital since her "Homage to Maria Callas" more than six years ago. At last she has returned to the studio in the repertoire closest to her heart. This will be

organisation that manages to combine a venerable historical tradition with a vital place in 21st-century London life, and am honoured to become a part of it.'

The Cathedral Choir currently comprises 26 boy trebles, eight probationers and 12 professional adult members. Jones is a hugely experienced choral singer, having performed with choirs including Stile Antico, the Gabrieli Consort, Tenebrae and the Choir of the London Oratory.

Andrew Carwood, St Paul's director of music, said: 'We are delighted that Carris is joining the Choir. The final round of auditions was of a very high standard and her appointment was a unanimous decision.'



Alice Coote records Mahler songs for Pentatone

without doubt one of the most highly anticipated releases of the season, and one that Warner Classics is particularly proud to present.'

Michael Collins records Reger's clarinet sonatas for Chandos

Leading British clarinetist Michael Collins and pianist Michael McHale are frequent collaborators for Chandos, with their recording of sonatas by Brahms and Reinecke becoming an Editor's Choice in March 2015. Their recording of Reger's clarinet sonatas, recorded at Potton Hall, is out in July.

The Hallé proposes to establish its own state music school

Parents who are concerned about the lack of adequate music provision in the UK's state schools may want to consider moving to Stoke-on-Trent, following the Hallé's announcement that it plans to open a state school there in 2020.

According to the proposal, which has been prepared in partnership with the City Learning Trust, students of the Hallé Music Free School will spend a minimum of 40 per cent of their time taking specialist music masterclasses with members of the Hallé orchestra and benefiting from being mentored by the Hallé Choir and Youth Orchestra, as well as attending two full Hallé concerts every year, alongside their more traditional academic studies. The proposal is subject to the approval of the Department for Education but, if approved, will see the Hallé become the first international orchestra in the world to set up and run a state music school.

John Summers, Chief Executive of the Hallé, said: 'Through our SHINE programme – which uses music enrichment as a key element of a Saturday-school learning programme – we know the very significant benefits that music can bring to a learning environment, helping all aspects of schoolwork and enabling children to fulfil their full potential. We see our new and exciting venture as a logical extension of this programme, bringing both inspirational and aspirational musical experiences to the young people of Burslem and beyond.'

Carl Ward, chief executive of the City Learning Trust, said: 'The proposed Hallé Music Free School will provide students with the opportunity to train with a world-class orchestra, inspiring the music teachers and music professionals of the future. The music free school curriculum will focus on skills transfer and career prospects whilst stretching our students' technical skills and encouraging their creative thinking.'

The City Learning Trust (citylearningtrust.org) is happy to be contacted by any businesses interested in becoming partners in the new school.

GRAMOPHONE *Online*

The magazine is just the beginning. Visit gramophone.co.uk for...

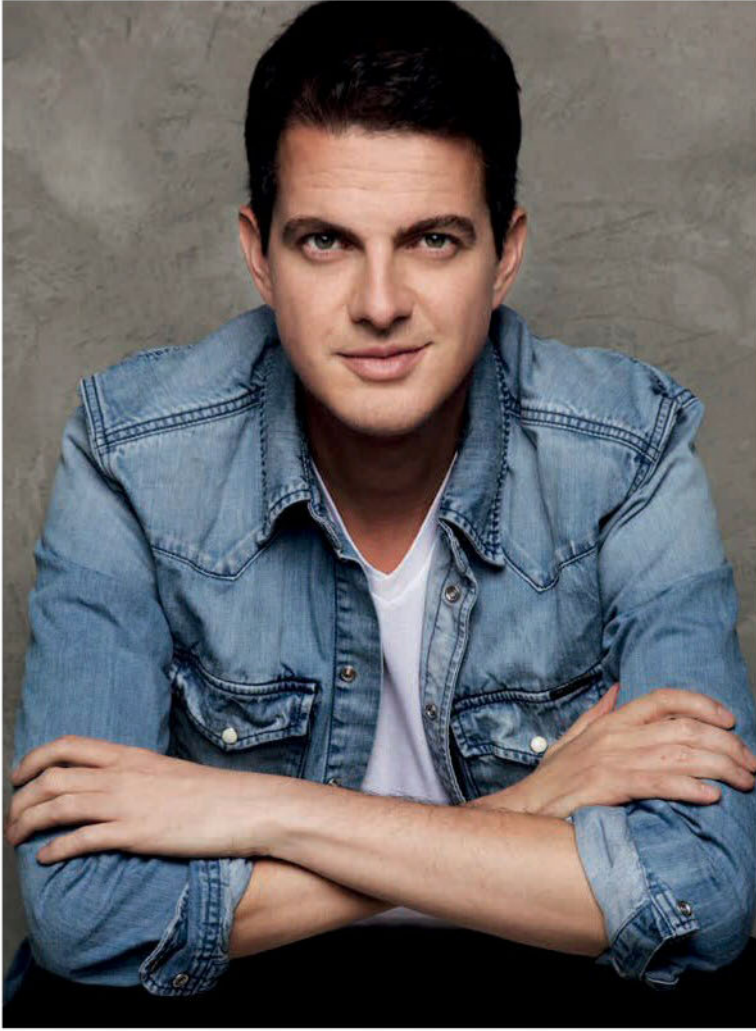
NEW PODCAST: PAAVO JÄRVI IN CONVERSATION

For our latest podcast, James Jolly meets former *Gramophone* Artist of the Year Paavo Järvi (pictured) to talk about his European tour with the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo, his recent recording of music by Richard Strauss for Sony Classical (*Don Juan* and *Ein Heldenleben*), the music of Takemitsu and the joys of working as a guest conductor.



VOTE FOR GRAMOPHONE'S HALL OF FAME

Gramophone's Hall of Fame – launched five years ago – celebrates the most influential singers, instrumentalists, conductors, producers, engineers and label executives in the history of classical music recording. Each year we add a new series of names, offering the chance to reflect on the people who have profoundly shaped the music we listen to. The time has come to help us choose the 2017 intake, so visit the *Gramophone* website to vote – and all voters will be in with a chance of winning a special box-set. You can also read about the illustrious artists already in the list: for each one, we've invited an artist of today to pay tribute, and recommend recordings.



COUNTERTENOR COOL



Defining voices: (L-R) Philippe Jaroussky, Max Emanuel Cencic and Franco Fagioli

What does it mean to be a countertenor in the 2010s? For French star Philippe Jaroussky, whose new recital disc of Monteverdi, Rossi and Sartorio is out on Erato this month, 'a countertenor nowadays is firstly an artist. People want to hear not "a countertenor" but a voice, an artist and a musician; never mind whether it's a countertenor, a tenor or a baritone or whatever.' This, you understand, is in contrast to the situation as recently as a couple of decades ago, when the high male voice was still seen primarily as a specialist 'early music' instrument, sometimes to be endured more than enjoyed. In the 1990s, the virtuoso operatic countertenor was perceived as being 'rather exotic', says Croatian singer Max Emanuel Cencic. 'Jochen Kowalski, David Daniels and Andreas Scholl were the three most exotic stars: there were plenty of other countertenors, but they were more for the hard-core Baroque lovers.' And his Argentinian counterpart Franco Fagioli agrees: 'We were, like, weird. People were still not used to listening to us, not in the opera house at least. Now we have arrived at a point where we're just another one of the normal voice registers, like a soprano or a tenor or a baritone.'

Fagioli and Cencic's recollections of the '90s may seem extreme to anyone who remembers listening to the wondrous voices of Alfred Deller as long ago as the '50s and '60s, James Bowman and Paul Esswood from the '70s onwards, Michael Chance in the '90s and more recently Andreas Scholl and Robin Blaze, but they do reflect a significant change in the world of

Audiences are finally sitting up and paying attention to the countertenors, thanks to more Baroque opera on stage and the advocacy of some supremely talented singers. **Lindsay Kemp** speaks to Philippe Jaroussky, Max Emanuel Cencic and Franco Fagioli about how today's countertenors know no limits

the countertenor. For the voice of the male alto has jumped free of its association with the English choral tradition and headed towards the mainstream, a darling not just of the growing number of productions of Baroque operas on the world's major stages, but increasingly of contemporary opera too. And with that has come a new type of singer – a generation of international countertenors in which figures such as Jaroussky, Cencic, Fagioli and Iestyn Davies are the stars, each with his own powerful and distinctive voice and background, and for whom modern scores, Rossini and even the 19th-century Lieder and chanson repertoire can be fair game.

Time was when the biggest names in the countertenor business had mostly come up by the same path: singing in an ecclesiastical choir as a boy and then, after the voice had broken, finding that the alto range, sung falsetto, was the one that came most naturally – to which the logical conclusion was to continue singing in an ecclesiastical choir as a man. In this way the male alto survived, in Britain at least, right through the 19th century and into the 20th, possibly without anyone really noticing, since these gentlemen were rarely required to be soloists.

The breakout moment came in 1943 with the discovery by Michael Tippett of Alfred Deller, then singing alto in Canterbury Cathedral Choir. Tippett, who was looking for singers for his Purcell revivals at Morley College, felt 'the centuries roll back' and promptly engaged Deller for his solo professional debut in a performance of *Hail! Bright Cecilia*. It was a significant moment, and Deller's progress from



From choir stall to concert stage and opera house: Andreas Scholl (above), and his predecessors (top to bottom) Alfred Deller, Michael Chance, and James Bowman



choir stall to concert stage became the common model for most 20th-century countertenors.

The fact that Deller's emergence coincided with the growing post-war early music movement undoubtedly helped determine notions of what natural countertenor territory was, namely (and, it should be said, without any particular historical justification) the gentlemanly English early song repertoire dominated by Dowland and Purcell. Bach's sacred music and Handel's oratorios figured strongly too, of course, but for many countertenors up until the end of the last century – major British figures such as Bowman, Chance, and the German Scholl – the one thing audiences seemed to require from them most, the standard test of their worth if you like, was the same skill they demanded of Deller: the ability to do a decent 'Flow my tears' or 'Music for a while'.

The change of emphasis that has sped the rise of powerful, generally higher-sounding voices of the likes of Jaroussky, Cencic and Fagioli started in the '90s, and can be summed up in four words: Baroque opera on stage. Twenty-five years ago, a complete Handel opera was a relative rarity not just in major houses but even on record. Today, almost all of Handel's operas have been recorded, and not only does every company want to stage them, they are even willing to consider Vivaldi, or Hasse, or Vinci, or Steffani.

It is a remarkable development, and has transformed the world of the countertenor too. For the problem had been that the heroic male roles in the music dramas of the high Baroque were written not for countertenors but for castrato singers of dazzling technique and vocal power. The lung-busting long roulades and exhausting high notes that were the pride of stars such as Senesino, Farinelli and Carestini are a rather different proposition from the intimacy of a lute song. The countertenors who in the last century took these parts were often fine artists, but the English (or should we say 'Anglican'?) type of voice

still tended to dominate, even amid a feeling that it was not quite the right tool for the job. 'The older way of singing', says Cencic, 'is good for Palestrina, for 16th-century choral music, even for 17th-century operatic repertoire such as Monteverdi and Cavalli – anything that doesn't make excessive technical demands. But the moment you go into the 18th-century repertoire, it's impossible: it's like a Mozart singer suddenly deciding to go into Wagner.'

To recreate the vocal power and technique of the castrati, then, big male castrato roles such as Handel's Giulio Cesare have often in the past been taken by female mezzo-sopranos; Janet Baker's performances for ENO in 1979 (and recorded in 1984) and Sarah Connolly's at Glyndebourne in 2005 are among many widely admired examples. The practice still survives, but even in the stylised world of Baroque opera the feeling lurks that it is better for a male role to be sung on stage by a male singer. And this is where the appearance of more 'operatic' countertenor voices has made its mark. 'Expectations have changed,' declares Fagioli. 'Countertenors have reached a point today where the technical level is much higher than it was, at least as far as opera is concerned. I'm not saying that singers 50 years ago were bad, just that this "new" Baroque repertoire has allowed us to be more ambitious in the matter of vocal technique.'

'The older way of singing is good for Palestrina... But the moment you go into 18th-century repertoire, it's like a Mozart singer suddenly deciding to go into Wagner' – Max Emanuel Cencic

This sounds like a bit of a chicken-and-egg question. Has the emergence of vocally secure and robust singers such as, first, Scholl and Daniels, then Jaroussky, and more recently Cencic and Fagioli, increased people's appetites for the showier and hitherto largely unexplored corners of Baroque *opera seria*, or has a greater understanding of a repertoire that was previously considered excessively formal and undramatic – not least in the matter of a man singing in a high voice – made it necessary for them to emerge? The answer is a bit of both, no doubt, but Cencic can see a third element. In 1999, Cecilia Bartoli released a disc of then practically unknown Vivaldi opera arias, including some from male roles, that sold half a million copies in its first year alone; her later releases included a whole disc devoted to arias for the great castrati. 'That changed things. People wanted to hear more Baroque opera. And at the same time, from 2000 on, there was a new generation of countertenors coming up who had a more sophisticated technique and the ability to perform castrato roles in a more convincing way. Philippe was growing as a star between 2000 and 2010, and from 2006 on I was bringing out a whole bunch of opera recordings that were extremely successful. Now, for traditional opera houses wanting to refresh their audience, it is less of a risk to stage a Baroque opera than to put on a newly composed one. Baroque opera sells well.'

For Jaroussky, the change in thinking about Baroque opera staging, with its tip of the balance in favour of countertenors in castrato roles, has been important. He is clear that there is still room for both countertenors and mezzo-sopranos, but also that the dramaturgical implications are significant. 'I just sang with Cecilia Bartoli in Handel's *Alcina* in Zurich, and it's true that my part, Ruggiero, has not so often been given to a countertenor. It's starting to be now, perhaps because in the story you have

OPUS ARTE



KING LEAR

SHAKESPEARE
Royal Shakespeare Company

Following his performance as Willy Loman in Arthur Miller's great 20th century American tragedy *Death of a Salesman*, Antony Sher returns to play King Lear, one of the greatest parts written by Shakespeare. The production is directed by the RSC's Artistic Director Gregory Doran.

DVD | BLU-RAY



GISELLE

ADAM
Royal Opera House

Giselle has remained a cornerstone of the classical repertory. Peter Wright's production is one of the most challenging and demanding ballet roles, and has always been a showcase for exceptional ballerinas. With Mariamla Nuñez's 'absolute mastery' of the choreography, she and her Albrecht, Vadim Muntagirov, are 'technically thrilling' (Guardian).

DVD | BLU-RAY



HANDEL

GIULIO CESARE
RINALDO · SAUL
Glyndebourne

This set brings together three of Handel's most compelling works for the stage in lavish Glyndebourne productions featuring period-instrument accompaniment from the renowned Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. David McVicar, Robert Carsen and Barrie Kosky direct.

5 DVD SET | 4 BLU-RAY SET



BALLET FOR CHILDREN

Royal Opera House

This unique collection brings together four jewels of the Royal Ballet repertoire that will delight and captivate young viewers the world over. Prepare to be enchanted by *The Tales of Beatrix Potter*, swept up in the magical world of *The Nutcracker*; dazzled by *Alice's Adventures In Wonderland* and spellbound by Prokofiev's classic *Peter and the Wolf*.

4 DVD SET | 4 BLU-RAY SET

opusarte.com





Jaroussky as the title-role in Vinci's *Artaserse* (2012); Fagioli as Idamante in Mozart's *Idomeneo* (2014); Max Emanuel Cencic at DG's 'Yellow Lounge' event in Berlin (2014)

Bradamante, dressed like a man, coming to Alcina's island to rescue her lover Ruggiero, and to have two girls dressed like a man can be a bit confusing on the stage! Of course, a mezzo can sing castrato parts beautifully, sometimes even better than a man. But it's good that on stage I don't have to *behave* like a man: I *am* a man. I'm sure the castrato singers appreciated that too, because after all they were taking parts such as kings and generals.'

The growth of the operatic countertenor has also had the effect of widening the voice type's catchment area, as well as the route by which young singers enter the profession. 'Each countertenor has his own history,' says Jaroussky, for whom inspiration came when, as an 18-year-old piano and violin student, he heard the Martinique-born 'sopranist' Fabrice de Falco and 'knew right away that this was what I wanted to do with my life'. For Fagioli, growing up in the northern Argentinian province of Tucumán, his moment of realisation is also clearly remembered: 'I sang soprano in a choir as a boy, and later when I was studying piano I never actually stopped singing in a high voice, but it was only to imitate women, to make jokes. I didn't know the countertenor was an actual vocal register! Then when I was playing piano for a choir that was performing the Pergolesi *Stabat mater* I bought a recording and heard this strange-sounding second part. When I looked at the box and saw that it said "Countertenor: James Bowman" I thought, "But this is what I am; this is what I want to do!"'

For the Zagreb-born Cencic, the story has a few more twists – 'a path of self-awareness and exploration', as he puts it, involving a career as a boy-soprano soloist and member of the Vienna Boys' Choir, then a period of indecision about music as any kind of career before committing to the life of a countertenor in his early twenties. Like both Jaroussky and Fagioli, however, he never really stopped singing in his head voice, something which he claims as one of the most important characteristics of the modern-day operatic countertenor. 'For the castrato repertoire

I would have to be brutal and say that, once your voice has changed into chest voice after breaking, you cannot flick back into falsetto – or only very rarely. I have seen many colleagues do that, then sing the castrato repertoire and destroy their voice with it. To sing 18th-century opera you have to be technically strong, and that means the approach to the technical development of your voice has to be different. You basically have to sing in falsetto all the time, right from the beginning.'

Jaroussky agrees on the need for an early commitment: 'I started at 18, but out there somewhere there is probably

a countertenor starting out much earlier than I did. Singers like that accumulate a huge amount of experience even before they reach their mid-twenties.' But he also detects another difference in the way today's countertenors are set on their course. 'We


must pay tribute to the first generation of countertenors because I can imagine they had to fight much more to impose themselves, and probably had to work much more on their own. Today we are technically working more like mezzo- sopranos or tenors. My teacher is a woman. I've worked with her for more than 20 years and she never tried to be less demanding of me because I was a countertenor. She was always trying to push the limits of my voice, just as she would with a mezzo.'

For Fagioli, who names Janet Baker and Marilyn Horne among his idols, nurture is as much a factor as nature in determining the direction one is likely to take, and one with an important historical parallel too: 'When Handel was in London and writing opera, he used Italian singers, and in the case of the lead roles they were almost always castrati, because they were trained in the Neapolitan school of singing that was suitable for Italian opera. But when he was writing oratorios in English, the singers he picked were mostly English, including countertenors. So in Handel's time already you had this difference. Today we can recreate this. Some countertenors are trained in the English school, some are trained in the German school, and others have

'My teacher has never tried to be less demanding of me because I was a countertenor. She was always trying to push the limits of my voice' – Philippe Jaroussky

been trained in the Italian *bel canto* idea – and you can hear it in the sound. *Bel canto* is not an ideal associated only with the 19th century; it's a tradition of singing that was there already in the first operas in Italy, and the 19th-century *bel canto* composers had a nostalgia for what they thought was a golden age of the great castrato singers of the 18th century. So the question of whether a countertenor sings in one way or another, in church music, in chamber music or in opera, is determined by the school of singing that he has pursued, the technique he got right back at the beginning.'

Jaroussky, Fagioli and Cencic all agree, though, that the most important thing is to find a way of singing that is comfortable for you, that suits both your voice and you as a person. 'When I started to sing my voice was quite small,' says Jaroussky. 'It was very flexible, very easy in coloratura, but with a lack of body, especially in the medium register. Early in my career things moved very quickly and suddenly, and when I sang in big halls I was scared, worried about whether people could hear me enough. I had to work hard on it so that now I know that when I'm on stage my voice is going out into the hall in a natural, normal way. And of course that means I can think now about singing parts I couldn't 10 years ago. I remember in the past when I was trying to be as violent as possible and I was fighting against my voice. I needed to work hard to find a depth that I didn't have naturally, and to be able to express things with a kind of serenity. That's why I prefer to sing a part like Ruggiero, because the character fits better with my personality. There are countertenor parts I will probably never sing on stage – for example [Handel's] Ariodante, not just because it's too big for my voice, but because the character of the part is too heroic.'

If opportunities have widened for the modern-day countertenor, there is an additional factor, a social one, which, as Cencic points out, is hard to deny, and which bodes well for the future of the voice: 'In the '80s and '90s, if you said you wanted to be a countertenor, you had to be brave. People would say, "Did you lose your balls?" or "Are you gay?". There was a social constriction. But now people realise that singing countertenor is not a special technique: it's a normal technique, and there are no social constraints any more. Today if someone of 16 or 17 comes along and says, "I want to sing countertenor," people will say, "OK, let's try it – plenty of others have done it!" So it's cool!' 

► Read Gramophone's review of Jaroussky's 'La storia di Orfeo' on page 116

REDEFINING THE COUNTERTENOR

The virtuosic new generation of high male voices on disc



Green *Mélodies françaises on Verlaine's poems*

Jaroussky, Ducros; Ebène Qt

Erato (5/15)

A seductive collection of French songs – from Fauré to Trenet – that finds Jaroussky on magnificent form.



'Arie Napolitane'

Cencic; Il Pomo d'Oro / Emelyanychev

Decca (12/15)

Truly virtuoso singing from the darker-voiced Cencic, supported with enormous style by Il Pomo d'Or.




Porpora Il Maestro

Fagioli; Academia Montis Regalis / de Marchi

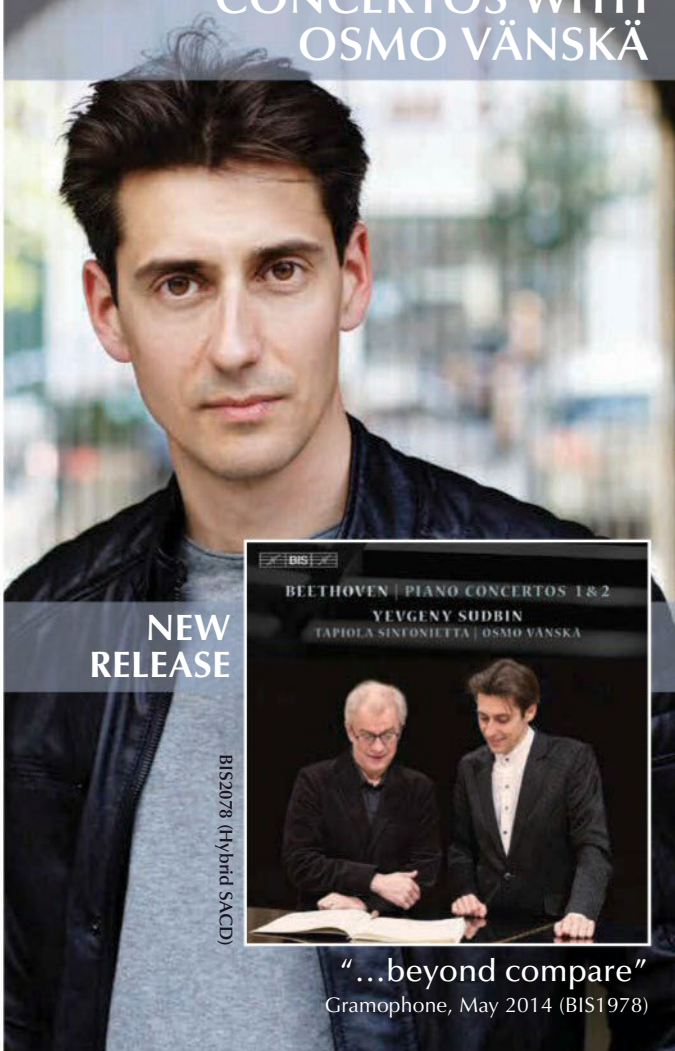
Naive (12/14)


Fagioli provides the perfect guide to this important composer and teacher of castrati Caffarelli and Farinelli.



YEVGENY SUDBIN

THE BEETHOVEN PIANO CONCERTOS WITH OSMO VÄNSKÄ






BEETHOVEN | PIANO CONCERTOS 1 & 2
YEVGENY SUDBIN
TAPIOLA SINFONETTA | OSMO VÄNSKÄ


**NEW
RELEASE**

BIS2078 (Hybrid SACD)

"...beyond compare"
Gramophone, May 2014 (BIS1978)



BIS1758



BIS1978

ALSO AVAILABLE

Marketed and distributed in the UK by Select Music and Video Distribution Ltd, 3 Wells Place, Redhill RH1 3SL
 T: +44 (0)1737 645 600 E: cds@selectmusic.co.uk
 Available for download in studio master quality from www.ecclassical.com
 For international distribution see www.bis.se



MARC-ANDRÉ HAMELIN:
reinventing the repertoire

For the virtuoso Canadian pianist Marc-André Hamelin, championing the lesser-known composers will always be at the heart of what he does, albeit with a little Rachmaninov and Schubert thrown in, writes Harriet Smith

Some of the highlights of my concert-going life have been courtesy of Marc-André Hamelin, be they his late-night Liszt recital at the 2011 Proms, Rzewski's *The People United* at Wigmore Hall or a Busoni Piano Concerto with the CBSO and Sir Mark Elder, for which he got the start time wrong, leaving Elder to entertain the audience in his inimitable way until the soloist could be tracked down. And if, to the delight of 'pianoraks' everywhere, he initially made his name with music at the more esoteric end of the spectrum, that's certainly not the case these days – in fact, he points out that he has now given more recitals of standard than non-standard repertoire.

'The more obscure repertoire was difficult to learn but I did it for the best of reasons – not for personal glory but because I wanted to share it'

Take his most recent disc, for example, out this month, with the London Philharmonic and Vladimir Jurowski. What could be more 'standard' than Rachmaninov's Third Concerto? But there's a Hamelin-esque twist as he combines it not with more Rachmaninov but with Medtner's Second Concerto.

'I'm extremely fond of the Rachmaninov Third,' he tells me, 'but the thrust of the CD was really to push the Medtner Second – which I really think is the best of his three piano concertos – a little bit more into the public eye and into the consciousness of other pianists too. I do believe it's a brilliant work in every respect.' Hamelin and Medtner have long been best buddies, as witness his cycle of the sonatas for Hyperion some two decades ago; not only was this the first complete recording but it also set

a benchmark that has yet to be superseded. He comments, with characteristic understatement: 'I'm happy that the set seems to have turned people round to Medtner, and it's great to find young pianists playing his music.'

Rachmaninov was a great admirer of Medtner, declaring him the finest composer of their time, and the feeling was mutual – Medtner dedicated his Second Concerto to Sergey, who returned the favour with his Fourth Concerto. But though the similarities are many – both late-Romantics (born seven years apart), both Moscow Conservatoire-trained, both brilliant pianists, both émigrés, both finding their particular

musical voice early on – how is it that one is a household name and the other the preserve of specialists? 'There is definitely a difference in the way that Rachmaninov reaches the listener,' says Hamelin. 'It's not that Medtner puts up a barrier, but his mode of expression just happens to be less immediate – it takes more time to get into it. But once you do, it really becomes rather irresistible.' And instantly recognisable, too – a fact that, I suggest, is down to Medtner's particular way with rhythm every bit as much as his melodic flair. 'That's true – and in the Second Concerto, particularly the first movement, that rhythm is so buoyant and full of life. I can't understand how you can fail to be captivated by it.'

Medtner was, though, his own worst enemy in terms of the dissemination of his music, and his refusal to play the fame game hardly helped matters. 'Rachmaninov used to tell him he ought to give concerts like everyone else and play other people's music, not just his own,' says Hamelin. 'Medtner had an offer

from HMV to record all the Beethoven sonatas – imagine that! – but he only recorded the one he loved the most, the *Appassionata*.'

Perhaps the issue of Medtner's relative obscurity is compounded by the fact that, in a work such as his Second Concerto, there's very little let-up for the soloist? 'True, but the saving grace is that everything is unbelievably pianistic, so even passages that sound very difficult are right under the fingers at all times. He really went out of his way to create situations that sounded difficult, even impossible, but which were absolutely conceived to fit comfortably under the hand.'

'By contrast, there are definitely awkward things in Rachmaninov and – I say this at the risk of blasphemy and raising the hackles of musicologists and even pianists – it is possible to re-score his music ever so slightly, occasionally taking out a note that is acoustically unnecessary. Of course I don't approach a piece intending to do this but sometimes, even in the Third Concerto, when no other solution can be found, it can make for a better result.'

There is a fine line between improvement and intervention, and some would argue that it isn't the place of the interpreter to mess about with what the composer wrote. But Hamelin, having experience of both disciplines, is in a better position than most when it comes to arguing the point. 'The thing is, if you have written music yourself, or at least tried to, if you have tried to translate your intangible notions into this imperfect system of notation, you quickly realise what a marvel the composer's task is. And it helps you to feel much closer to the creator of the work you are performing – sympathetic, too. It also allows you to make better decisions, because you don't suddenly want to be faithful to every ink blot on the page. You are much more likely to make reasonable choices.'

Would he argue, then, that a slavish adherence to the score is rather unimaginative? 'In a way, yes. And, with many composers, the score is a frozen moment in time. It doesn't reflect afterthoughts. It doesn't allow for sometimes diametrical changes of mind. Of course one shouldn't make extreme decisions that are completely against what the score says, but

sometimes it is permissible to go a little bit away from it.'

Hamelin then strolls over to the piano and offers a rather more provocative example of what we're talking about. The first of Schubert's second set of Impromptus, D935, gains a more extended ending, but one that sounds entirely fitting stylistically, rounding off the piece with great grace. 'It's such an incredible piece, going on a real journey, but it basically finishes without a coda.' Deadpan. 'So I added one. I've been playing it like this for three years now and the most negative comment I got was that I did a bizarre improvisation!' He gleefully adds that one of the places he'd performed it was at the Schubertiade in Austria, and bursts out laughing at the memory.

Warming to the theme, he suggests that the last movement of the *Trout* would benefit in the same way. But he has yet to convince his string-player colleagues about that.

Hamelin has now been with Hyperion for nearly a quarter of a century, with more than 60 discs under his belt. It all began when Mike Spring, creator of the label's hugely successful Romantic Piano Concerto series, heard him give a recital with the cellist Sophie Rolland and asked him if he'd like to contribute to the series. The result was Vol 7, coupling concertos by Alkan and Henselt – and the rest is history.

Though the vast majority of his recording catalogue has been dedicated to solo repertoire, there have been a number of notable chamber discs, from standard repertoire such as the Brahms piano quartets (with the Leopold String Trio) and the Franck Piano Quintet (with the Takács Quartet), to rarities such as the Ornstein Quintet, in the company of the Pacifica Quartet, with whom he has a particularly warm relationship. It is with them that he premiered his own Piano Quintet in February.

'I'd already written part of it, a Passacaglia, in 2002 so the commission was to complete it with two additional movements,' Hamelin recalls. 'It was interesting writing for strings, as I've never played a string instrument.' Had he, like Brahms, felt the need to consult his fellow players? 'No – in fact the string writing is fairly unadventurous. The first movement is a *moto perpetuo* but a serene one and the piano features heavily. But the third movement features the strings a lot more and me a lot less. Beyond that, it might sound very alien to post-modern ears because it's very tonal.' You mean Medtner would have approved? 'I think it's more post-Fauré. It wasn't intentional – it's just the way it came out. I find I go in different directions depending on what the germinal idea is.'

Also preoccupying Hamelin at the time of our conversation was the completion of the test piece for the 2017 Van Cliburn Competition, for which he is also making a rare appearance on the jury. 'The piece is about two-thirds done and it has been an interesting project – I didn't want to write something that was impossible technically, but instead wanted to make it a musical challenge. It's quite a serious piece. But the daunting thing is that



Marc-André Hamelin recording in London's Henry Wood Hall

everyone is going to have to play it, not just the semi-finalists. So', he says, laughing, 'it will be heard more than 30 times.' That will surely be fascinating? 'Or absolutely stultifying – depending on how the piece comes out!'

Competitions in general are, he feels, a necessary evil, but he particularly dislikes the way they tend to encourage a single-mindedness from the earliest stages of study. 'I do believe in a well-rounded musical training, even though I'm not the most shining example of this. I play the piano, I compose, as a young school kid I played the clarinet and I sang a lot and I've edited music – but that's not a huge range. I would encourage people to go further because everything feeds into everything else.

Sometimes inspiration, enlightenment, watershed moments, can come from the unlikely places.'

There's no question that, when it comes to repertoire, Hamelin's appetite is hearty indeed. 'With some of the more obscure repertoire, Roslavets for example, it was atrociously difficult music to learn but I did it for the best of reasons – not for personal glory but because I wanted to hear it. The reason I do any of this is to share, and the most that I want this collection of recordings to have accomplished is to have made some kind of a difference as far as people's appreciation of this repertoire is concerned.'

But Hamelin's next recording couldn't be more central: Schubert's last piano sonata, the great B flat major, D960. Is it a work in which he feels the weight of history in a way that he hasn't with more left-field repertoire? 'This may sound pretentious and I don't want it to, but I wouldn't bother doing it if I didn't feel that the recording could make some kind of mark.' He was encouraged by the reaction he got at the Schubertiade, who asked him to perform the B flat Sonata for his first appearance there in 2014. 'I still can't believe they trusted me with

it, but their reaction was very positive, and that gave me a lot of courage.'

He was minded to issue the live version with some edits but, having listened to it, subsequently decided he could do better. He'll be recording it in the studio in May, for release in 2018. 'The common comment that I get is that my live performances are usually better than my studio recordings and, although I approach both with exactly the same degree of commitment, I'm ready to accept that, because inevitably, when I'm on stage, there's going to be more of a desire to reach out more, to communicate, even though I'm not aware of it. The sonata will be coupled with those D935 Impromptus, for which I will be attacked for that coda!'

Turning our back on the mainstream again, Hamelin's current preoccupations are typically diverse, if alphabetically close: Feinberg and Feldman. One concert programme this season features no fewer than six sonatas – by Haydn, Beethoven, Chopin, Feinberg (Nos 1


*'Sometimes inspiration, enlightenment,
watershed moments, can come from
the unlikely places'*

and 2) and Scriabin. That's quite ambitious, even by Hamelin's standards. 'I'm very seriously trying to introduce Samuil Feinberg's works to people! There are 12 piano sonatas and, until relatively recently, the music just wasn't published in the West, except for the Sixth Sonata. Other than that, you just couldn't get hold of the scores.' That's one area which has been transformed by the internet in general and websites such as the Petrucci Music Library in particular. Feinberg, born in 1890, a decade after Medtner whom he outlived by 11 years, is better known to us in the West as a prodigious pianist, but he was very reticent about his own music. It's admittedly very demanding or, as Hamelin puts it, 'very polyphonic, very pianistic. I don't want to use the word "gnarly" because I think there's a negative connotation there, but it's extremely closely knit piano writing. It's the kind of thing I love.' It's also the kind of thing that he does better than almost anyone – the same could be said of the Chopin-Godowsky studies or the aforementioned and distinctly gnarly Roslavets, to whose music I'm afraid I have never warmed.

'I've been playing Feinberg's First and Second Sonatas, and have given a couple of performances of the Fourth,' Hamelin continues with enthusiasm. 'I really want to concentrate on the first six, which to me are the most convincing – even though he never published the Third. The music is really, really fascinating and I'm very pleased to say it has gotten very positive reactions. Many people hear echoes of Scriabin, particularly the Scriabin of the Fourth and Fifth Sonatas, and certainly pianistically they have some similarities. But by the Fourth Sonata Feinberg doesn't sound like anyone else. You may at some point hear the same kind of harmonic individuality as Prokofiev in his wildest, most atonal moments, but even then, I find it's very different in effect.'

Alas, we have no commercial recordings of Feinberg playing his own music, though he did make some home recordings late in life which Hamelin – inveterate collector of the arcane that he is – has encountered. Unfortunately, the resulting tapes were 'more hum than music', despite the quality of the playing.

But on the release front, it's Morton Feldman that will follow the Rachmaninov/Medtner concertos, and a single work: *For Bunita Marcus*, due out this August. 'It's a world that I love, even if I'm not sure why. I'm trying to write the notes for the disc at the moment and that's proving to be extraordinarily difficult because there are so many things I want to say and such a variety of angles from which the piece can be approached. But it's astonishing to me that a work that has so few notes on the surface can be so multi-layered. It's more than 70 minutes long, uninterrupted, very sparse, quiet.'

Did he record it a single take? 'I did, though it will need some editing. You have to, really, because you have to get the pace from the very first note.' It's a work equally demanding of the listener, the right head space and the right setting being more than usually paramount. 'One of the extraordinary things about *For Bunita Marcus* it is that it completely revolutionised what we perceive a piano piece to be. It doesn't fit into the accepted piano-recital framework – it has to be relegated to contemporary music festivals or some kind of special event because it has to stand alone, and it's the kind of work that would disorientate a lot of listeners. Sorabji's *Opus clavicembalisticum* would be easier to programme because it's an event. But with this piece, it's not about the performer anymore, or the personality cult or the occasion. It's about sound, time and space.' 

► To read Gramophone's review of Marc-André Hamelin's new Medtner recording, turn to page 56

24TH SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL PIANO FESTIVAL

FANTASIES & MEMORIES

1-4 JUNE 2017

VICTORIA CONCERT HALL



JOSEPH MOOG

THE 2015 GRAMOPHONE
YOUNG ARTIST OF THE YEAR

"Clearly he is already among
the most brilliant of pianists"
GRAMOPHONE



WONG CHIYAN

"Chiyan Wong is an exciting,
original and thoughtful pianist."
STEPHEN HOUGH



HÜSEYİN SERMET

"Most impressive was Sermet's
delicacy and his remarkable
ability to terrace his tone to
elucidate textures"
INTERNATIONAL PIANO



STEPHEN KOVACEVICH

"A master to be admired; faithful
to the spirit of the music"
INTERNATIONAL PIANO

Tickets: \$19 - \$86

www.pianofestival.com.sg

SGPIANOFEST  

PRESENTED BY

VICTORIA
CONCERT HALL
HOME OF THE 180

OFFICIAL HOTEL

CONRAD
CENTENNIAL
SINGAPORE

OFFICIAL AIRLINE

SINGAPORE
AIRLINES
A great way to fly

THE ELEVENTH

ENGLISH MUSIC FESTIVAL

In 2017, the BBC Concert Orchestra returns to The English Music Festival with world première performances of important works by Vaughan Williams, Stanford and Montague Phillips, while other events range from major orchestral and choral concerts in Dorchester Abbey, through the soaring voices of choristers and English piano trios, to a late evening guitar recital and the dapper New Foxtrot Serenaders. Join us for another Festival full of exquisite music-making, fascinating talks and bubbling conviviality!

For further information contact Festival Director Em Marshall-Luck at
English Music Festival, Suite M0222, 265-269 Kingston Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 3NW
or by email to: em.marshall-luck@englishmusicfestival.org.uk.

26-29 MAY 2017

DORCHESTER-ON-THAMES, OXFORDSHIRE

www.englishmusicfestival.org.uk

EM RECORDS



EMR CD037-38

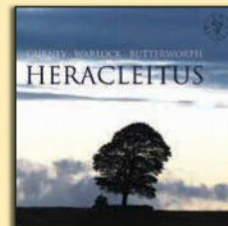


NOW COMES BEAUTY

commissions
from The English
Music Festival

BBC Concert Orchestra
Gavin Sutherland (conductor)
David Owen Norris (conductor)
Roderick Williams (baritone)
Rupert Marshall-Luck (violin)

EMR CD036

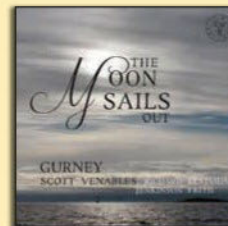


HERACLEITUS

Gurney, Warlock
and Butterworth

The Bridge Quartet
Michael Dussek (piano)
Charles Daniels (tenor)

EMR CD031



IVOR GURNEY: Cello Sonata;
CYRIL SCOTT: Cello Sonata

and works for Cello
and Piano by Ian Venables
and Cyril Scott

Richard Jenkinson (cello)
Benjamin Frith (piano)

Join us as a Foundation Subscriber to receive a free copy of each disc as soon as it is released, individual disc subscription benefits and a pair of free tickets to all recitals, launches, receptions, parties and events that EM Records organises.

Visit www.em-records.com for further details of subscription schemes, audio-clips and to purchase discs or contact Director Em Marshall-Luck at em.marshall-luck@em-records.com or on 07808 473889.

EM Records is distributed in the UK by Discovery and world-wide by Launch Music International

GRAMOPHONE *Festival* GUIDE 2017

As the days grow warmer, the coming months offer an abundance of festivals in the UK, Europe and North America. Explore our listings, which include 'special focus' events featuring world-premieres, and make your plans!

UK FESTIVALS

Aldeburgh Festival

June 9-25

This year the Aldeburgh Festival celebrates the 50th anniversary of Snape Maltings Concert Hall. Britten-themed highlights include a new production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* directed by Netia Jones, and the first ever Snape Maltings performance of *Billy Budd*. Other highlights: Belgian ensemble Vox Luminis and sitarist Nishat Khan have residencies; featured composers are Bill Fontana, Olga Neuwirth and Jörg Widmann; and, among the festival's 13 world premieres, is a new work by Oliver Knussen. In addition, Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla makes her Aldeburgh Festival debut with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and Poulenc's *La voix humaine* is performed in a house near Snape Maltings.

snapemaltings.co.uk

Bampton Classical Opera

July 21-22 (The Deanery Garden, Bampton)

August 28 (The Orangery Theatre, Westonbirt School, Glos)

September 12 (St John's, Smith Square, London)
Founded in 1993, Bampton Classical Opera aims to breathe new life into

rare 18th-century operatic gems and give a platform to the UK's best young singers. This summer's opera is *The School of Jealousy*, arguably Salieri's most successful work though not staged in the UK since the late 18th century. This new production is designed and directed by the company's co-artistic director Jeremy Gray, and conducted by Opera North's Anthony Kraus.

bamptonopera.org

Bath Festival of Music and Literature

May 19-28

Bath's major festival has undergone a reinvention this year, but the classical offerings are just as strong. A new strand is the BathSongs: six concerts on 'Brahms to Broadway' with performances from tenor Joshua Ellicott and mezzo Ann Murray. Other highlights include Herbert Blomstedt conducting the Philharmonia in Beethoven's Symphony No 7 and Brahms's Piano Concerto No 1 with soloist Martin Helmchen. Cellist Steven Isserlis talks about his recent book on Schumann and plays a recital of Kurtág, Bach and Britten, plus there are appearances from Tenebrae and the Dunedin Consort.

thebathfestival.org.uk

BBC Proms

July 14 - September 9

Details are announced on April 20.

bbc.co.uk/proms

Beverley and East Riding Early Music Festival

May 26-29

This festival, based in the Yorkshire market town of Beverley and organised by York's National Centre for Early Music, is 30 this year. Highlights include Vivaldi concertos from La Serenissima, whose recording of *Le quattro stagioni* made the 2016 *Gramophone* Awards shortlist, and a programme of 16th-century masterpieces from The Tallis Scholars in Beverley Minster. There's also a visual exhibition, *Through the Looking Glass*, featuring Belgian contemporary artist Rudi Knops's *Speculum Musurgica*, and the manuscripts of Petrus Alamire, some of the most decoratively illustrated choirbooks in history.

ncem.co.uk/bemf

Bradfield Festival of Music

June 24 - July 1

Highlights include recitals from the Escher String Quartet, and pianist Benjamin Grosvenor performing with violinist Hyeyoon Park. The

closing concert is from ZRI, a group comprising some of the UK's most exciting young instrumentalists: violinist Max Baillie, cellist Matthew Sharp, clarinettist Ben Harlan, accordionist Jon Banks and Iris Pissaride on santouri, in a programme that gives a flavour of the music that Brahms, Schubert and others might have listened to at the Zum Roten Igel tavern in Vienna.

bradfieldfestivalofmusic.co.uk

Brighton Festival

May 6-28

The UK's largest and most established multi-arts festival is guest-directed this year by recording artist, poet, playwright and novelist Kate Tempest, and boasts a tempting array of classical offerings. These include: Jonathon Heyward conducting Chineke! Orchestra, with BBC Young Musician winner cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason; early music ensemble I Fagiolini marking Monteverdi's 450th anniversary with the English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble, reconstructing a service of Vespers as it might have been heard in 1640; and violinist Nikolaj Znaider conducting, and performing as soloist with, the LSO.

brightonfestival.org

**BUXTON
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL**

Opera.Music.Books
7-23 July 2017
buxtonfestival.co.uk

Macbeth (1847)

Giuseppe Verdi

Albert Herring

Benjamin Britten

Lucio Silla

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Box Office: 01298 72190



THE Two Moors Festival
PATRON: HRH THE COUNTESS OF WESSEX GCVO

Extraordinary music in remarkable places

Media Partner
CLASSIC fm

13-21 October 2017
A week of chamber music, Lieder and recitals
in Dartmoor and Exmoor
National Parks

www.thetwomoorsfestival.co.uk | Box Office 01392 665885

PRESTEIGNE FESTIVAL
GŴYL LLANANDRAS

24-29 AUGUST
24-29 AWST
2017

'An outstanding array of talent, both creative and interpretative, sets the Presteigne Festival apart from all other annual musical events.'
Musical Opinion Quarterly

Nightingale Quartet · Leonore Trio · Berkeley Ensemble
Gemma Rosefield · Rachel Roberts · Benjamin Nabarro
Tim Horton · Rebecca Afonwy-Jones · Katherine Baker
Laura Snowden · Suzy Willison-Kawalec · Festival Orchestra
Sine Nomine International Touring Choir and much more...

Free brochure available April
01544 267800 | www.presteignefestival.com

Buckingham Summer Festival**July 1-8**

This festival offers morning piano recitals, and lunchtime and evening concerts. This year features Haruko Seki as soloist in Haydn's Piano Concerto No 11, and Christopher Redgate performing Strauss's Oboe Concerto with the Orchestra of Stowe Opera under Robert Secret, in a programme alongside Mahler's Symphony No 4.

buckinghamsummerfestival.org

Bury St Edmunds Festival**May 19-28**

Aurora Orchestra makes a welcome return to the festival this year. Among other highlights are concerts from the Takács Quartet and the Tallis Scholars.

buryfestival.co.uk

Buxton Festival**July 7-23**

This Peak District festival offers a wealth of opera, music and literature. The first of this year's operatic productions is Verdi's *Macbeth*, with Stephen Barlow conducting the Northern Chamber Orchestra, followed by *Albert Herring*, *Lucia Silla* and Guto Puw's new Welsh-language opera, *Y Tŵr*. Concert highlights include: pianist Paul Lewis playing Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Weber; the Brodsky Quartet performing Beethoven, Borodin and Shostakovich; and mezzo Sarah Connolly accompanied by pianist Joseph Middleton.

buxtonfestival.co.uk

Cambridge Summer Music Festival**July 14-19**

Founded in 1979 as an organ recital series, CSM now brings the highest-calibre performances to Cambridge and surrounding villages, from solo and chamber repertoire through to works for massed choir and orchestra. Performing artists this year include Aurora Orchestra, the Martinů Quartet, Tenebrae, Orpheus Sinfonia and Gabrieli Roar.

cambridgesummermusic.com

Carducci Festival Highnam**May 19-21**

This annual festival run by the Carducci Quartet takes place at Highnam, near Gloucester, and this year features guest artists including clarinettist Emma Johnson and pianist Martin Roscoe. Experience chamber music ranging from Beethoven to Philip Glass alongside performance opportunities for local families and young musicians.

carduccifestivalhighnam.co.uk

Festival of Chichester**June 17 - July 16**

Classical, rock, blues, jazz, folk and world music rub shoulders in this festival that has become one of the largest in the south. Classical acts

this year include: the Hanover Band; the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra playing in the cathedral; Russian pianist Victor Ryabchikov with a programme of Field, Chopin and Russian Romantic music; and French pianist Patrick Hemmerle playing Schubert's *Fantasie*.

festivalofchichester.co.uk

Chipping Campden Music Festival**May 14-27**

Each year, this two-week festival in Chipping Campden's St James's Church presents a programme packed with the world's top performers. The Freiberg Baroque Orchestra makes its festival debut this year, performing Monteverdi's *Vespro della Beata Vergine* with Vox Luminis. Other festival debuts are pianist Cédric Tiberghien with violinist Alina Abragimova, the brass ensemble Septura, baritone Roderick Williams with pianist Iain Burnside, and pianist Nikolai Lugansky. Returning regulars include pianist Paul Lewis (the festival's president), cellist Steven Isserlis, and the Academy of Ancient Music with Richard Egarr.

campdenmusicfestival.co.uk

Corbridge Chamber Music Festival**August 4-6**

This Northumberland festival based at St Andrew's Church, Corbridge, is hosted and directed by the Gould Piano Trio and clarinettist Robert Plane, all of whom perform as usual this year, along with guests including composer and clarinettist Mark Simpson. Repertoire for 2017 includes Simpson's new Piano Trio, the Tchaikovsky Trio and Sextet, the Weber Clarinet Quintet, Farrenc's Clarinet Trio, Mendelssohn's *Konzertstücke* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* arranged for piano trio and clarinet.

corbridgefestival.co.uk

The Cumnock Tryst Festival**September 28 - October 1**

The Cumnock Tryst Festival returns with a packed programme performed in venues across Cumnock and at Dumfries House. This year's festival features a Festival Chorus performance under the baton of Eamonn Dougan, a further project in partnership with the acclaimed Drake Music Scotland, world premieres of specially commissioned works, and contributions from world-leading performers - all under the artistic direction of James MacMillan.

thecumnocktryst.com

Dartington International Summer School and Festival**July 29 - August 26**

Set on the medieval Dartington Estate in the heart of the Devon countryside, this festival, under the

PREMIERE FOCUS**Cheltenham Music Festival****July 1-16**

Cheltenham delivers another packed programme of events.

The opening concert features Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, who conducts the City of Birmingham

Symphony Orchestra in Stravinsky's *Petrushka*; this is paired with

a performance of Chopin's Piano Concerto No 2 by Jan Lisiecki.

Monteverdi 450th anniversary celebrations include a semi-staged production of *L'Orfeo* from I Fagiolini. Other highlights include:

a symphonic concert from the Hallé and American conductor Jonathon Heyward; a rare solo recital by Bryn Terfel; an appearance from cellist and BBC Young Musician winner Sheku Kanneh-Mason; and premieres of major new works by John Casken, Ryan Wigglesworth and David Matthews.

cheltenhamfestivals.com/music



Cheltenham hosts a premiere by David Matthews

artistic directorship of Joanna MacGregor, runs a programme of more than 90 concerts alongside a packed educational programme. The offerings, under four themed weeks, include a migration and exile theme, entitled *Stories in Transit*, and a week exploring English identity through works such as Purcell's *King Arthur*. Performers include Stile Antico, soprano Emma Kirkby, countertenor Andrew Watts and pianist Pascal Rogé. There is also a performance of *Peter Grimes* with Paul Nilon in the title-role.

dartington.org

Dorset Opera Festival**July 25-29**

Set within 400 acres of Dorset countryside at Bryanston, this 43-year-old country-house opera festival offers two large-scale productions per season. Worth noting is its relaxed vibe: there may be champagne bars and cream teas, but there's no dress code. This year's productions are Rossini's *Le comte Ory* conducted by José Miguel Esandi and directed by David Phipps-Davis, and Gounod's *Faust* conducted by Jeremy Carnall and directed by Christopher Cowell.

dorsetopera.com

East Neuk Festival**June 28 - July 2**

This Fife-based festival features a Schubertiad for 2017, focusing on the decade between 1816-26 when Schubert matured from boyhood to manhood. Works include the 'Wanderer' Fantasy, the 'Trout' Quintet and *Die Schöne Müllerin*, with performances from artists including pianists Elisabeth Leonskaja and Malcolm Martineau, and the Belcea Quartet. There are also appearances from clarinettist Julian Bliss, two concerts from guitarist Sean Shibe, plus an abundance of brass bands.

eastneukfestival.com

Edinburgh International Festival**August 4-28**

This year is the 70th anniversary of the world-famous festival. Classical music and opera performances take place at the Festival Theatre and Usher and Queen's Halls, while a series of early music concerts are held at the newly renovated St Cecilia's Hall. There's an expanded opera offering for 2017 to mark the anniversary, celebrating the central role that opera has played in the history of the festival.

eif.co.uk

English Haydn Festival**June 7-11**

With its theme of 'Haydn across the Years', this year's Bridgnorth-based festival focuses on Joseph Haydn's musical influence. Artists include the Salomon String Quartet, the Florilegium Quintet and violinist Simon Standage, performing works by Joseph and Michael Haydn, Beethoven and Mozart, among others. A particular highlight is the world-premiere performance of Luke Bedford's quartet *Orbita*.

englishhaydn.com

The English Music Festival**May 26-29**

The BBC Concert Orchestra under Martin Yates opens the 2017 festival in Dorchester Abbey with a programme featuring four world premieres: the orchestral version of Vaughan Williams's *Henry V* Overture and his *EFDS Folk Song March*, plus a concert overture from Stanford, and Montague Phillips's Symphony in C minor. Other highlights include Paul Carr's *Requiem for an Angel* with Bath Camerata, and the Carice Singers performing English part-songs. Song and chamber enthusiasts are catered for with works by Moeran and Howells, among others.

englishmusicfestival.org.uk

PREMIERE FOCUS

Glyndebourne

May 20 - August 27

A new production of Cavalli's *Hypermetra* from Graham Vick opens the 2017 season, with Emöke Baráth in the title-role and William Christie conducting the Orchestra of the Age of the



From *La Traviata* to, in 2017, a Brett Dean commission

Enlightenment. Also on the bill is the world premiere of a festival commission, Brett Dean's *Hamlet*; directed by Neil Armfeld, with Vladimir Jurowski conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra, it features Allan Clayton in the title-role, joined by a starry cast including Sarah Connolly, Barbara Hannigan and John Tomlinson. Robin Ticciati conducts the OAE in the festival's other new production, Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, which is directed by Claus Guth.

glyndebourne.com

Fishguard International Music Festival

July 24 - August 1

Events for this Welsh festival are held in Fishguard, Goodwick and across North Pembrokeshire, with tours of local sights, a festival service and family performances making for a real community feel. The European Union Chamber Orchestra opens the festival this year under the baton of Hans-Peter Hofmann, bringing a programme of Bach, Handel, Haydn and Mozart to St Mary's Church, Haverfordwest. Other highlights include a St David's Cathedral concert from Welsh National Opera Orchestra conducted by Tuomas Hannikainen, and the Gould Trio performing in St Peter's Church, Goodwick.

fishguardmusicfestival.co.uk

Garsington Opera

June 1 - July 30

Based at the Wormsley Estate in the Chiltern Hills, Garsington expands its season in 2017 to four opera productions. This year also sees the start of a partnership with the Philharmonia Orchestra. Opening the season is a new production of Handel's *Semele*, directed by Annilese Miskimmon and conducted by Jonathan Cohen, with a cast including Christine Rice and Christopher Ainslie. Other new productions are Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, directed by Michael Boyd and conducted by Jac van Steen, and *Silver Birch*, a new large-scale community opera by Roxanna Panufnik.

garsingtonopera.org

The Grange Festival

June 7 - July 9

It's all change at Northington's the Grange estate. Formerly the home of Grange Park Opera, it's now the base for The Grange Festival under the artistic direction of Michael Chance; developments include the

gardens and ornamental lake newly restored to their full Greek revival glory. The productions are Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, Bizet's *Carmen* and Britten's *Albert Herring* (the latter featuring Aurora Orchestra's Grange debut). Concerts include Francesco Cilluffo conducting the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in Verdi's Requiem, and John Wilson and his orchestra in a celebration of the musical partnerships of Rodgers & Hammerstein and Rodgers & Hart.

thegrangefestival.co.uk

Grange Park Opera

June 8 - July 15

Under the artistic direction of Wasfi Kani, Grange Park Opera was until recently based at the Grange in Northington, now home to The Grange Festival. The festival has kept its name, but moved to the 15th-century Surrey manor house, West Horsley Place, where an atmospheric new theatre has been built in the estate's woods. Verdi's *Tosca* opens the season, Joseph Calleja and Ekaterina Metlova heading up the cast under the baton of Gianluca Marciano with the BBC Concert Orchestra. It's followed by Katie Mitchell's 1998 production of Janáček's *Jenůfa*, with the BBC Concert Orchestra under William Lacey, and Wagner's *Die Walküre*, with Stephen Barlow conducting the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

grangeparkopera.co.uk

Gregynog Festival

June 16 - July 2

Pageantry is this year's theme for Wales's oldest extant music festival. It's inspired by the historic Harlech Castle Musical Festival, in operation a century ago, which attracted a multi-arts creative community to the region each summer. Among the achievements being celebrated are Arnold Dolmetsch's work on the medieval music and instruments of

Wales. Events take place in Aberystwyth, Chirk and Gregynog; there's also a long weekend in Harlech itself. Artists include pianist Liŷr Williams, the Ricercar Consort, recorder player Michala Petri with harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani, lutenist Thomas Dunford, clarinettist Robert Plane with the Gould Piano Trio, saxophonist Amy Dickson, and Septura brass ensemble, who perform in Harlech Castle.

gregynogfestival.org

Harrogate Music Festival

June 30 - July 30

Classical, jazz and contemporary music are all covered by this North Yorkshire spa town's festival, with workshops, family events and a Young Musician Series running alongside the main concerts. Highlights include a performance from the Armonico Consort and chamber recitals from some of the current crop of BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists. Light music is provided by the John Wilson Orchestra, the Alex Mendham Orchestra and Postmodern Jukebox.

harrogateinternationalfestivals.com

Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival

September 28 - October 1

Under the artistic direction of cellist Guy Johnston, this festival - based in Queen Elizabeth I's childhood home - turns six this year. Full details are announced in April, but last year Johnston was joined by Angela Hewett, James Gilchrist, Alison Balsom and The Bach Choir, so we can expect great things. Concerts take place in the Marble Hall, the Old Palace and the Private Chapel. This year, there will also be a new venue inside the main house.

hatfieldhousemusicfestival.org.uk

Henley Festival

July 5-9

Set on the banks of the River Thames - and even on the Thames itself thanks to the floating stage - the Henley Festival combines a multi-genre music programme with food, fireworks and non-musical arts. The classical offerings aren't numerous, but the overall atmosphere makes it worth a look when the programme is launched.

henley-festival.co.uk

Holt Festival

July 22-30

This North Norfolk Georgian town hosts a mixture of music, literary, drama, visual arts and family events. This year's classical strand has a distinct emphasis on the voice. Among the highlights are the Pop-up Opera touring company presenting Chabrier's *Une Education Manquée*, and the Spanish opera singers, tenor Javier Aguillo and soprano Amparo

Navarro, performing a history of opera through arias and duets from Monteverdi and Mozart to Verdi and Puccini. A non-vocal highlight comes from guitarist Mariano Mangas.

holtfestival.org

Holy Week Festival

April 9-15

A partnership between St John's, Smith Square and Tenebrae, this brand new festival offers a unique way to mark Easter, presenting a series of concerts around the atmospheric Tenebrae services that traditionally take place in the early hours of Holy Week's Thursday, Friday and Saturday. However, the concerts - featuring the likes of Voces8, The Hanover Band and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment - take place at thoroughly civilised times. Highlights include a candlelit concert from Tenebrae and Aurora Orchestra of Fauré's Requiem, and a Bach partita from Aurora's violinist Max Baillie.

sjss.org.uk

tenebrae-choir.com

Iford Arts

May 27 - August 5

This west country festival takes place in the Grade I-listed Peto garden of Iford Manor, near Bath. Opera is staged in the round and sung in English. There are informal promenade concerts and seated cloister concerts. The season opens with Christopher Cowell's new production of Puccini's *La bohème*, conducted by Oliver Gooch, and with Anthony Flaum as Rodolfo and Maire Flavin as Mimì. The other two operas are Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Handel's *Jephtha*.

ifordarts.org.uk

Lammermuir Festival

September 15-24

This East Lothian festival uses venues across the county, from historic houses and churches through to the Concorde Hangar at the National Museum of Flight. There are two themes this year - Pilgrimage, and the music of Haydn. The festival is book-ended by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Martyn Brabbins, and the Dunedin Consort under John Butt. A mid-festival highlight is the Orlando Consort performing a live soundtrack to Dreyer's 1928 silent film, *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*, in Haddington's St Mary's Church. Other artists appearing include Quatuor Mosaïques, Tenebrae and the Gould Piano Trio.

lammermuirfestival.co.uk

Lichfield Festival

July 7-15

Classical highlights in the city's cathedral include the Hallé, The Sixteen's 'Choral Pilgrimage', percussionist Evelyn Glennie, the

#EDINTFEST

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

PASSIONATE ACTS

Macbeth

Teatro Regio Torino conducted
by Gianandrea Noseda and
directed by Emma Dante

La bohème

Teatro Regio Torino conducted
by Gianandrea Noseda and
directed by Àlex Ollé

Don Giovanni

Budapest Festival Orchestra
conducted and directed by
Iván Fischer and starring
Christopher Maltman

Greek

Scottish Opera conducted by
Stuart Stratford and directed
by Joe Hill-Gibbins

L'Orfeo, Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria

and **L'incoronazione di Poppea**

Concerts by English Baroque Soloists and Monteverdi
Choir and conducted by Sir John Eliot Gardiner

Die Walküre

Concert by Royal Scottish National Orchestra
conducted by Sir Andrew Davis and starring
Bryn Terfel and Christine Goerke

Peter Grimes

Concert by Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra conducted
by Edward Gardner
and starring Stuart Skelton

DON'T MISS A SINGLE ONE

5-27 AUG
BOOK NOW
EIF.CO.UK

• EDINBURGH •
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL



Charity No SC004694

OXFORD • LIEDER • FESTIVAL

THE LAST OF THE ROMANTICS

MAHLER AND FIN-DE-SIÈCLE VIENNA



13-28
OCTOBER
2017

- A fascinating immersion in Vienna at the turn of the twentieth century, focussing on Gustav Mahler: his influences, contemporaries and legacy
- Mahler's complete songs, as well as songs from Beethoven to Strauss, bringing many of the world's greatest musicians to Oxford
- Chamber, piano and choral music, talks, study events, workshops and masterclasses and more illuminate this pivotal period in musical history

WWW.OXFORDLIEDER.CO.UK



14th – 27th May 2017

ARTISTS INCLUDE:

PAUL LEWIS	TAKACS QUARTET	JACK LIEBECK
FREIBURGER BAROCKORCHESTER	ACADEMY OF ANCIENT MUSIC	RODERICK WILLIAMS
STEVEN ISSERLIS	ALINA IBRAGIMOVA	NIKOLAI LUGANSKY
VOX LUMINIS	CÉDRIC TIBERGHEN	IAIN BURNSIDE
RICHARD GOODE		

*"One of the finest acoustics
I encountered in my 60 year career"*

Alfred Brendel

Full online booking available
www.campdenmusicfestival.co.uk
charlie@campdenmusicfestival.co.uk
 01386 849018



STOUR
MUSIC

The Tallis Scholars ■ I Fagiolini
 English Cornett & Sackbut Ensemble
 The King's Consort
 Amici Voices ■ Radio Antiqua
 Handel: Samson

*Festival of Early Music
in East Kent*

Boughton Aluph Church

16-25 June 2017

Ticket enquiries 01227 769075
 Brochure 01233 812740
www.stourmusic.org.uk



Swaledale Festival

MUSIC, ARTS & WALKING IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES

27 MAY TO 10 JUNE 2017

STEPHEN HOUGH
 JOHN WILLIAMS/JOHN ETHERIDGE/GARY RYAN
 LONDON MOZART PLAYERS
 RED PRIEST
 VOCES8
 NATIONAL YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA
 NORTHERN MONKEY BRASS BAND
 and much more...

swalefest.org

[f Swaledale-Festival](https://www.facebook.com/Swaledale-Festival) [@SwaleFest](https://twitter.com/SwaleFest)




24th YEAR

World Premiere:
 Luke Bedford: "Orbita"

Haydn Across The Years

Soloists:
 Cristophe Coin - violoncello
 Simon Standage - violin
 Pavel Serbin - violoncello
 Mark Baigent - oboe
 Rachel Beckett - flute

Michael Haydn's "Requiem"
 conductor: John Moore

Philippa Tanner - soprano
 Miranda Westcott - alto
 Daniel Norman - tenor
 Andrew Slater - bass

ENGLISH
HAYDN
FESTIVAL

English Haydn Orchestra
 Conductor: STEVEN DEVINE

BRIDGNORTH, SHROPSHIRE

7 JUNE - 11 JUNE 2017

The Quatuor Mosaïques Quartet
 The Salomon String Quartet
 The Florilegium Quintet
 The Festival Wind Ensemble

Phone: 07547289704
 Web: www.haydn.org.uk



Orchestra of the Swan and spiritual music with Black Voices and Lichfield's own Gospel Choir. Elsewhere in the city, actor Juliet Stevenson and musicians bring Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* to life and Oz Clarke joins Armonico Consort for an evening of music and wine. A recital series showcases young musicians, and there's also a mini-residency by Mr McFall's Chamber that includes a new work by Henning Sommerro. lichfieldfestival.org

London Festival of Baroque Music

May 12-20

'Baroque at the Edge: Pushing the Boundaries' is the theme for 2017. Events include Vox Luminis and the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra collaborating in a performance of Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers. Also of note is a talk from festival artistic director and *Gramophone* critic Lindsay Kemp. Other highlights include a harpsichord recital from French virtuoso Jean Rondeau, before he joins the improvising musicians - lutenist Thomas Dunford and percussionist Keyvan Chemirani - for a 'Late o'Clock Baroque'. lfbm.org.uk

London Piano Festival

October 6-8

Launched last year, the London Piano Festival returns to Kings Place for another weekend. Festival co-founders Katya Apekisheva and Charles Owen will be back to curate the 2017 offerings, which include a significant Russian presence in terms of repertoire and pianists. londonpianofestival.com

Longborough Festival Opera

June 8 - August 4

This country house opera festival has an especially intimate feel, thanks to its 500-seat auditorium. It also has a special commitment to the music of Wagner. As such, the season opens with the festival's acclaimed 2015 production of *Tristan und Isolde*, the cast led by tenor Peter Wedd and soprano Lee Bisset, with Anthony Negus conducting. It continues with new productions of Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. The Young Artist Production this year is Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* conducted by Jeremy Silver. lfo.org.uk

Love: Handel Festival

April 22-23

The Brook Street Band celebrates its 20th anniversary year by launching and performing its own Handel Festival. Based in Norwich, an area currently lacking an early music festival, this begins as a two-day event, but there are plans to develop it into a biennial four-day festival. The ethos is accessibility, with an

emphasis on education combined with fun. Under 18s go free to concerts and, in addition to the Handel performances themselves, there are illustrated talks, dance workshops and family activities. brookstreetband.co.uk

Mendelssohn on Mull

July 2-7

Set on the Hebridean isles of Mull and Iona, and in Oban, the picturesque festival is an annual commemoration of Mendelssohn's productive visit to Scotland. This year it celebrates its 30th anniversary with a focus on the Octet, performed in a new edition from Mendelssohn's first version prepared by festival director Richard Jeffcoat. With emerging professionals from the UK's conservatoires among the participants, the dozen concerts also feature the music of Mozart, Haydn, Dvořák and Shostakovich. mendelssohnonmull.com

Milton Abbey International Music Festival

July 31 - August 5

Hosted by vocal group VOCES8, the festival presents a week of performances in Dorset's 12th-century Milton Abbey, running in tandem with a musical summer school open to people from all walks of life. This year VOCES8 sing an *a cappella* concert, and another featuring Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers in honour of the 450th anniversary. The closing gala concert presents Handel's 'Zadok the Priest' and 'The King Shall Rejoice' along with Bach's Magnificat in D. miltonabbeyfestival.com

Music at Paxton

July 14-23

Ten days of chamber music take place in the intimate surroundings of the Picture Gallery at Paxton House, Berwick-upon-Tweed. Harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani gives a morning recital, then it's Bach's *Goldberg Variations* in the evening. Cellist Pieter Wispelwey returns to complete his Bach Cello Suite cycle and Baroque violinist Bojan Cicic and his Illyria Consort feature in Handel, Ariosti, Carbonelli and Corbetta. Other artists include Quatuor Zäide who make their Scottish debut, Steven Osborne performing Rachmaninov, and the Elias Quartet with pianist Benjamin Frith for the Schumann Piano Quintet. lfbm.org.uk

Music in the Round's Festival of Chamber Music

May 5-13

It's 'Russia in the Round' this year at Sheffield's chamber music festival, and the opening concert from resident group Ensemble 360 is an all-Russian affair, featuring the music of Tchaikovsky as well as Glazunov's

PREMIERE FOCUS

Lake District Summer Music International Festival

July 29 - August 11

Incorporating around 40 events in 12 venues spread across the South Lakes, this year's festival sees the centenary of the Russian Revolution marked with music by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Shostakovich and Stravinsky. The opening event is Bach's B minor Mass performed from memory by Solomon's Knot. There is also a Schubert spotlight, including *Gramophone*'s 2016 Young Artist of the Year, Benjamin Appl, in *Winterreise*, plus rarely heard early quartets, and the Octet with artists-in-residence the Berkeley Ensemble. Other resident artists include Robert Cohen, the Chilingirian Quartet and the Gould Piano Trio. Mark Simpson and Michael Berkeley have festival commission premieres, while families can enjoy an event that mixes puppetry and music by the Palisander Recorder Quartet. ldsm.org.uk



Chamber music is one strand of this year's festival

Idyll for horn and string quartet. The colourful programme includes string quartets and piano trios performing music from Borodin and Rachmaninov to Shostakovich and Prokofiev. Highlights include Benjamin Frith and Peter Hill in two-piano arrangements of Tchaikovsky's *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake*, and Stravinsky's *Petrushka*, while Tim Horton performs Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* in Sheffield's Winter Garden and the Crucible Studio. musicintheround.co.uk

Newbury Spring Festival

May 6-20

The festival features more than 45 classical, folk, jazz and cabaret concerts spread across a dozen venues in Newbury and the surrounding countryside, including Highclere Castle, Coombe Manor and the Long Gallery at Englefield House. Opening the festival are the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Festival Chorus under David Parry in a performance of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*. New this year is a cabaret evening presented by Petroc Trelawny, starring Richard Sisson and Susan Bullock, while other classical highlights include the Armonico Consort in a complete performance of the Monteverdi 1610 Vespers, and concerts from trumpeter Alison Balsom with soprano Lucy Crowe, pianist Stephen Hough, and Harry Christophers and The Sixteen. newburyspringfestival.org.uk

Norfolk & Norwich Festival

May 12-28

This multi-arts festival is probably the oldest in the UK, tracing its history to 1772. This year's big classical event in St Andrew's Hall is Thomas Adès conducting the Britten Sinfonia in Beethoven's First

and Second Symphonies, along with Gerald Barry's setting of Beethoven's famous 'immortal beloved' letter, with baritone Mark Stone as soloist. nnfestival.org.uk

North Norfolk Festival

August 15-26

This year's festival focuses on the life of William Walton, opening with afternoon screenings of Tony Palmer's 1980 film portrait *At the End of the Haunted Day*, plus *La Mortella*, the short film about Walton's famous garden, introduced by Alessandra Vinciguerra, director of the William Walton and La Mortella Foundation; a performance of *Façaade* follows. Other artists include violinist Rachel Pogger, pianists Melvyn Tan and Louis Schwizgebel, viola player Tim Ridout in recital with pianist Tom Poster, and the Doric and Piatti String Quartets, all punctuated by suppers in the festival marquee. northnorfolkmusicfestival.com

North York Moors Chamber Music Festival

August 13-26

'Arcadia' is 2017's main theme for the festival founded and directed by cellist Jamie Walton, its two weeks featuring music from Dowland to Adès. The Quartetto di Cremona is in residence, performing alongside returning regulars including Katya Apekisheva, Tamsin Waley-Cohen, Hugo Ticciati and Adam Johnson. Highlights include a theorbo set from Matthew Wadsworth, plus a chamber-and-organ arrangement of Alban Berg's Violin Concerto. A 'Nature in Music' theme is visually complemented by displays of specially commissioned photographs from Paul Ingram, photographer-in-residence for Ayriel Classical, the record label that has grown out of the festival. northyorkmoorsfestival.com

PREMIERE FOCUS

Malcolm Arnold Festival, Northampton

October 14-15

Based at Northampton's Royal & Derngate theatre complex, this festival presents live orchestral and chamber music, plus films and talks, centred around British composer Malcolm Arnold and his music.

Offerings for 2017 include a number of world premieres, a gala concert, and a family concert with guest artists including the former Director of the Royal Ballet, Dame Monica Mason, in conversation.

malcolmarnoldfestival.com



The music of Malcolm Arnold comes to Northampton

Opera Holland Park

June 1 - July 29

A new production of Puccini's *La rondine* from Martin Lloyd-Evans opens the season, its cast led by Elizabeth Llewellyn and Matteo Lippi, with Matthew Walden conducting resident orchestra the City of London Sinfonia. The season features two more new productions: Mozart's *Don Giovanni* from Oliver Platt (the cast includes Ashley Riches, John Savournin, Lauren Fagan and Ben Johnson), with Dane Lam conducting, and Leoncavallo's *Zazà*, directed by Marie Lambert, conducted by Peter Robinson, and with Anne Sophie Duprels in the title-role. Later, Julia Sporsén sings the title role in Janáček's *Katya Kabanova*, conducted by Sian Edwards. Will Todd's family opera *Alice in Wonderland* is also back, and there are end-of-year performances from the Royal Ballet School.

operahollandpark.com

Oxford Chamber Music Festival

September 27 - October 1

With concerts at The Sheldonian and Holywell Music Room and under the artistic direction of Priya Mitchell, this year's theme is 'Fata Morgana': musical mirage, mirrors and double identity, hidden codes, and more. Evelyn Glennie opens the festival, with musicians from Hugo Ticiatti's O/Modernt chamber orchestra of Stockholm. There are chamber concerts featuring the music of Ravel, Golijov, Schnittke and Beethoven, before cellist Matthew Barley is joined by Indian musicians in a closing programme of classical and Indian-inspired music - and The Beatles!

ocmf.net

Oxford Lieder Festival

October 13-28

Under the theme 'The Last of the Romantics: Mahler and *fin-de-siècle* Vienna', this year's festival presents

Mahler's complete songs with piano over the course of its 16 days.

Mahler's Vienna is also placed in a wider context, through the songs of Schubert, Beethoven, Brahms, Wolf, Zemlinsky, Korngold, Joseph Marx and Richard Strauss, while a late-night salon looks ahead to the Second Viennese School.

The soloists themselves are the usual starry bunch, including Ian Bostridge, Sarah Connolly, Angelika Kirchschlager, Mark Padmore, Roderick Williams and Imogen Cooper. Nestled among the performances are also study days, readings, screenings and workshops.

oxfordlieder.co.uk

Oxford May Music

April 26 - May 1

This festival combines music and science, under the artistic direction of violinist Jack Liebeck and administration of renowned particle physicist Professor Brian Foster. This 10th anniversary year sees the festival move from the Holywell Music Room to the SJE Arts Centre. Classical artists appearing are Jack Liebeck himself, oboist Nicholas Daniel, viola player Simon Oswell, pianists Danny Driver and Katya Apekisheva, I Fagiolini, and the Myrthen Ensemble founded by accompanist Joseph Middleton and comprising soprano Mary Bevan, mezzo Clara Mouriz, tenor Allan Clayton and baritone Marcus Farnsworth.

oxfordmaymusic.co.uk

Oxford Piano Festival and Summer Academy

July 30 - August 7

This festival combines concerts in some of Oxford's most beautiful buildings with a residential daily programme of lectures and public masterclasses. Fanny Waterman and Alfred Brendel will give talks, there are return appearances from John Lill, András Schiff and Menahem Pressler, and debuts from

Yefim Bronfman with the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra, Saleem Ashkar with an all-Beethoven recital, and Richard Goode in Merton College Chapel. There's also a young artist debut from former BBC New Generation Artist Zhang Zuo.

oxfordphil.com

Passiontide at Merton

April 7-9

The festival incorporates three days of talks, concerts and services at the Oxford college over the Palm Sunday weekend, with many visitors choosing to stay in College for the duration. Although the college choir (which records on Delphian) is the resident ensemble, there are also guest artists. One highlight is Bach's *St Matthew Passion*: the choir and its conductor Benjamin Nicholas are joined by Oxford Baroque and soloists Rogers Covey-Crump, Giles Underwood, Elin Manahan Thomas, Helen Charlston, Nicholas Scott and Henry Neill. The other visiting ensembles this year are the Berkeley Sinfonia, and the Marian Consort with Rory McCleery.

merton.ox.ac.uk/chapel-choir/passiontide-at-merton-2017

Portsmouth Festivities

June 16-25

This year's festivities feature the Maggini Quartet in a concert alongside pianist Peter Donohoe, the pianist, organist and conductor Wayne Marshall, and woodwind masterclasses by Ivor Novello Award-winning composer and saxophonist John Harle.

portsmouthfestivities.co.uk

Perth Festival of the Arts

May 15-27

One of the oldest continuously running arts festivals in Scotland, the festival's concerts take place in Perth Concert Hall and historic St John's Kirk, which dates back to the 15th century. Classical highlights this year include English Touring Opera's *Tosca* and violinist Nigel Kennedy in recital. The Russian Revolution centenary is marked by an all-Russian choral programme from Tenebrae and the closing concert from Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, in which Yuri Botnari conducts Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No 3 featuring soloist Freddy Kempf.

perthfestival.co.uk

Plush Festival, Dorset

June 16 - September 9

In 2017, Plush Festival is directed by Adrian Brendel in collaboration with composer Sir Harrison Birtwistle. Events take place in St John's church in Plush, Dorset, and alongside the concerts you can enjoy open rehearsals, films and illustrated talks. Highlights include a piano recital by Andras Schiff performing Bach's *Well-Tempered*

Clavier; a song recital with Mark Padmore interweaving Birtwistle's *Orpheus Elegies* with late Schubert songs; Gothic Voices performing Machaut's motets alongside Medieval organum music arranged for saxophones and cello; and a Festival Day of chamber music featuring leading musicians such as viola player Lawrence Power, pianist Tim Horton and violinist Corey Cerovsek.

plushfestival.com

Presteigne Festival

August 24-29

One for those who enjoy a healthy offering of new music alongside their Beethoven and Brahms, this Powys-Herefordshire border festival celebrates both its 35th anniversary this year as well as the 90th and 85th birthdays respectively of composers John Joubert and Hugh Wood. Festival commission performances include a string quartet from composer-in-residence Edward Gregson. The Festival has also commissioned six composers - Martin Butler, Cheryl Frances-Hoad, Michael Zev Gordon, Gabriel Jackson, David Knotts and Jack Sheen - to write new sets of solo piano bagatelles in response to Beethoven's Bagatelles Op 126. Add a spotlight on Danish music, including an appearance from previous *Gramophone* Young Artist of the Year The Nightingale Quartet, plus new string orchestra variations based on the folksong 'Lovely Joan' from composers Sally Beamish and Huw Watkins, and there's no doubt about it - it's a truly packed season.

presteignefestival.com

Proms at St Jude's

June 24 - July 2

The church of St Jude-on-the-Hill in north London's Hampstead Garden Suburb is the venue for the festival. This year it celebrates its 25th birthday with a line-up of artists including the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, the Chilingirian Quartet, and Nevill Holt Opera in a concert performance of Puccini's *Tosca* under the baton of its artistic director Nicholas Chalmers.

promsatstjudes.org.uk

Ryedale Festival

July 14-30

This North Yorkshire festival brings established and emerging artists to perform in spectacular and historic venues across Ryedale such as Castle Howard, Sledmere House and Ampleforth Abbey. 'Dreams and Visions' is the theme for 2017, highlights including Sir Mark Elder and the Hallé Orchestra performing Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* at York Minster, and the Orchestra of Opera North performing Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* in Scarborough Spa's Grand Hall.



PORTSMOUTH FESTIVITIES
16-25 JUNE 2017

10 DAYS OF
ARTS, CULTURE AND
HERITAGE FOR ALL

  
portsmouthfestivities.co.uk

MUSICFEST 30th Anniversary Year
Aberystwyth 22nd - 30th July

Guy Johnston
Tom Poster
Sacconi Quartet
David Campbell
Orion Orchestra
Solem Quartet
Jamie Campbell

Credit: Keith Morris

8 day festival of concerts and courses

01970 623232
<http://musicfestaberystwyth.org>
 www.facebook.com/AberMusicFest  @MusicFestAber

Southwell Music Festival
24-28 August 2017
The best of classical music in the heart of Nottinghamshire



"Southwell can already equal, even surpass, more established festivals."
THE SUNDAY TIMES

A virtuoso ensemble of young professional singers and players
Up-and-coming local performers including cellist **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** (Winner of BBC Young Musician 2016)


southwellmusicfestival.com/onlinebooking 0115 989 5555

WORCESTER
22-29 JULY 2017

Programme online 31 March
3choirs.org
Booking opens in April
 @3choirs  3ChoirsFestival


THREE CHOIRS FESTIVAL
The world's finest choral music

WENT I SAW NEW PEOPLE YEA AND SKY AND SUN DAY TIME NIGHT TIME MOTHER AND FATHER FAMILY MEN AND WOMEN IN THE STREETS FLASHES AND SPECKS THESE BECAME



JAM on the Marsh

Music • Art • Photography • Poetry • Theatre
on Kent's Romney Marsh
6 – 16 July 2017

Musical highlights include:

BBC Singers, Jamie Walton & Daniel Cook perform the world premiere of a piece commemorating WW1 Battle of Vimy Ridge – where so many British and Canadian troops lost their lives. The work by British composer, Tom Harrold, and Canadian composer, Stuart Beatch, sits alongside music by Tavener, Elgar, Howells, Finzi and Rutter.

London Mozart Players, Daniel Cook & Michael Bawtree perform Poulenc's *Organ Concerto*, Judith Bingham's *Jacob's Ladder* and Albinoni's *Adagio*, featuring 3 organs from France, England and Holland! Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro* and Sibelius' *Rakastava* complete the programme.

David Rees-Williams Trio performs a toe-tapping programme uniting the best of classical and jazz.

Sounds Baroque and Julian Perkins take us on a journey from Bach and Handel to Judith Bingham on rare, richly resonating, early instruments.

For full festival details & to book online:
www.jamconcert.org
Box Office: 0800 988 7984



ORCHESTRAS *Live* **RVW** Trust

THE ROGER DE HAAN
CHARITABLE TRUST

BBC
RADIO



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND



THE 12TH MALCOLM ARNOLD FESTIVAL

"ABOUNDING IN SINGABLE TUNES"
Saturday 14th October

– Sunday 15th October 2017

Royal & Derngate, Northampton

Director: Paul Harris

LIVE MUSIC, FILMS AND TALKS ON SIR MALCOLM ARNOLD AND HIS MUSIC

This year's Festival features a Family Concert with **the Glasgow Philharmonia** performing audience favourites including John Williams' Harry Potter Suite, performances from the

Rushden Brass Band, and the **Janus Ensemble** conducted by **Ben Palmer**; guests including

Dame Monica Mason and **David Mellor**, and a Gala Concert given by the **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **John Gibbons**, in

Grieg's Piano Concerto, Malcolm Arnold's award-winning soundtrack from 'Bridge over the River Kwai', and his compelling Symphony No 5.

www.malcolmarnoldfestival.com



Salisbury
International
Arts
Festival

26 May - 10 June 2017

salisburyfestival.co.uk

0845 241 9651



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra • Clare Teal
Chineke! • Barokksolistene • Heath Quartet
OperaUpClose • Le Vent du Nord
I Fagiolini • Bollywood Brass Band

Where will we take you?



ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Wiltshire Council
Wiltshire everybody matters

There's also a new festival production of Mozart's *The Garden of Disguises* (*La finta giardiniera*), with a new translation by John Warrack, while artists in residence include composer Sally Beamish and the Royal Northern Sinfonia. ryedalefestival.com

Ageas Salisbury International Arts Festival

May 26 - June 10

The 2017 edition of this multi-arts festival looks westwards, taking inspiration from the sunset and celebrating the arts and culture of the French-Canadian province of Quebec. Classical offerings include the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra performing a concert in Salisbury Cathedral under Christian Kluxen, to include Tchaikovsky's Symphony No 6 (*Pathétique*). I Fagiolini celebrate their 30th anniversary, in turn marking Monteverdi's 450th with a selection of music. salisburyfestival.co.uk

Sherborne Abbey Festival

April 28 - May 2

With 70 per cent of all performances offering free entry, this is one of Dorset's most accessible music festivals. Highlights include a Beethoven recital from violinist Nicola Benedetti, a concert by clarinettist Emma Johnson, and choral music from Tenebrae. sherborneabbeyfestival.org

Southern Cathedrals Festival

July 19-22

Music, services and talks combine in a choral festival that rotates around the cathedrals of southern England. This year it's the turn of Winchester Cathedral, and one of many highlights will be the final concert celebrating Monteverdi's 450th anniversary, in which the cathedral choirs are joined by Florilegium for a performance of the 1610 Vespers. southerncathedralsfestival.org.uk

Southwell Music Festival

August 24-28

This Nottinghamshire festival held in and around the spectacular Southwell Minster is now in its fourth year. The brainchild of baritone Marcus Farnsworth, the festival offers musical offerings including recitals, chamber music and large-scale choral works. southwellmusicfestival.com

St Endellion Summer Festival

July 25 - August 4

This Cornish festival boasts a strong programme: Charles Owen performs Schumann's Piano Concerto in the opening concert, and the featured opera is Britten's *Billy Budd*, conducted by Ryan Wigglesworth and starring Roderick Williams as Billy, John Tomlinson as Claggart and the festival's artistic director, Mark Padmore, as Captain

Vere. The major choral performance is Verdi's Requiem at Truro Cathedral, also conducted by Wigglesworth, with soloists including Sophie Bevan, David Butt Philip and Matthew Brook. Also on the bill is a concert of orchestral excerpts from *Götterdämmerung*, with Brünnhilde's Immolation sung by Rachel Nicholls, plus there are chamber recitals, lunchtime concerts and late-night events. endellionfestivals.org.uk

Stour Music

June 16-25

Founded in 1962 by countertenor Alfred Deller, this Kent festival takes place in the wonderful acoustic of the pilgrim church of All Saints' Boughton Aluph. Details are still to be confirmed but the festival is likely to include appearances from renowned ensembles and a final large-scale choral concert. stourmusic.org.uk

St Magnus International Festival

June 16-21

This Orkney festival uses venues throughout the ancient Orcadian landscape including the mediaeval Cathedral of St Magnus in Kirkwall, the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness and further-flung venues on the islands of Stronsay and Rousay. One strand this year celebrates centuries of links between Orkney and Scandinavia, and the opening concert marks this with the world premiere of Alasdair Nicolson's *Pilgrim*, with words by one of Norway's most famous writers, John Fosse, performed by the Trondheim Soloists and BBC Singers in St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, before they travel to the Olaf Festival in Trondheim. Other visiting artists include pianist Steven Osborne, the Edinburgh Quartet, The Assembly Project, pianist Ashley Frapp, soprano Mhairi Lawson and lutenist Elizabeth Kenny. stmagnusfestival.com

Swaledale Festival

May 27 - June 10

This Yorkshire festival combines top-class musical acts with local flavour thanks to brass bands, guided walks in the Dales countryside, and the annual Reeth Lecture which this year sees David Owen Norris ask, 'What is the point of classical music?' Artists to look out for are pianist Stephen Hough, guitarists John Williams, John Etheridge and Gary Ryan, the London Mozart Players Chamber Ensemble, VOCES8, and the Fidelio Trio performing an Alexander Goehr premiere. Early music is well represented by the four-piece Baroque group Red Priest. The Young Artists Platform includes BBC Young Musician Sheku Kanneh-Mason alongside two of his

PREMIERE FOCUS

Vale of Glamorgan Festival

May 19-26

Notable for celebrating the work of living composers, 2017 sees the premieres of four festival commissions: a work for brass quintet and fairground organ by Guto Puw, *A Road You Can Go* by American Ben Wallace, Steph Power's *and ante*, inspired by different types of walking, and a concerto for amplified recorders by Graham Fitkin, performed by its dedicatee Sophie Westbrook with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. Also worth catching this year is the UK premiere of *Roll Over Beethoven* as part of a performance by Robin Green and Mei Yi Foo of the complete piano works of John Adams. America's Grand Band and Poland's Apollon Musagète Quartet are both in residence. There is also a new composer studio named in memory of composer Peter Reynolds, plus the opportunity to attend walks and talks. valeofglamorganfestival.org.uk



Massed pianos at last year's festival

siblings, plus saxophonist Jess Gillam (see Ulverston entry), the National Youth Jazz Orchestra and the Arch Sinfonia. swalefest.org

Three Choirs Festival

July 22-29

The historic festival comes to Worcester this year. Much of the programme, starring the cathedral choir along with resident orchestra the Philharmonia, is based on 1917, which saw both the Russian Revolution and America's entry into the First World War. The former event is marked by Shostakovich's Symphony No 12, paired with Mozart's C minor Mass. Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* opens the week, and other choral works include Mendelssohn's *St Paul*, Elgar's *Gerontius* and Dove's *There Was a Child*. Daytime concerts include an organ recital from Wayne Marshall, and a new work from Roderick Williams performed by the Voice trio. 3choirs.org

The Two Moors Festival

October 13-21

Chamber music, early music, Lieder recitals and an orchestral concert from world-class artists take place in atmospheric venues across Dartmoor and Exmoor national parks during this festival. 'Inspirations' is the theme for 2017, an idea that evolved as the programme came together rather than by initial design. Concerts include recitals from the Heath Quartet and from violinist Tasmin Little, three Schubert song cycles to be performed over the course of a single day, and Haydn's *Creation*. thetwomoorsfestival.co.uk

Ulverston International Music Festival

June 7-17

This annual festival, under the artistic directorship of pianist Anthony Hewitt, is located within

a stone's throw of the Lake District National Park, and offers both performances from top international artists as well as exciting young talent. English Touring Opera opens the festival with its new production of *Tosca*. Another highlight is a programme from violinist Hugo Ticcianti pitting 'improvised' Bach against Arvo Pärt. Other artists include the Royal Northern Sinfonia, saxophonist Jess Gillam (2016 BBC Young Musician of the Year runner-up), Remi Harris Project with a jazz night, percussionists O Duo, and a closing-night programme from classical-meets-folk Paprika. ulverstonmusicfestival.co.uk

West Meon Festival

September 15-17

This Hampshire festival comprises a long weekend of chamber concerts hosted by the Primrose Piano Quartet. This year, guest artists include clarinettist Michael Collins and the Vickers Bovey Guitar Duo; there is also a Saturday morning children's concert. www.westmeonmusic.co.uk

York Early Music Festival

July 7-15

YEMF celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. One highlight, amid the illustrated lectures, workshops and educational activities, is I Fagiolini, who join forces with the English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble in honour of Monteverdi's 450th anniversary with a promenade show in York Minster. Harry Christophers and The Sixteen then return with a Palestrina-and-Poulenc programme. The Consone String Quartet, the 2015 winners of the biennial Early Music International Young Artists Competition, also make a return visit; the 2017 competition takes place during the festival week. ncem.co.uk/yemf



**LET'S DISCOVER THE MOST FANTASTIC
FRENCH SUMMER FESTIVAL OF CLASSICAL MUSIC !**

WITH SIR JOHN ELIOT GARDINER, SIR ROGER NORRINGTON,
MARC MINKOWSKI, FRANÇOIS-XAVIER ROTH, NICHOLAS COLLON,
ROBERT KING, DOUGLAS BOYD, NICOLAS CHALVIN, OMER MEIR WELLBER...

A lot of masterpieces of Berlioz as
Damnation of Faust, *Les Nuits d'été*, *Irish Melodies*,
The Shakespearean concert, *Symphonie fantastique*,
Harold en Italie...

And also *Water Music* and *Fireworks Music* (Handel),
The Rite of Spring (Stravinsky), *Enigma Variations* (Elgar),
Symphony No. 3 "Scottish" (Mendelssohn), *Shéhérazade* (Ravel),
An Orkney Wedding, with Sunrise (Maxwell Davies)...

**...AND MANY OTHER SURPRISES,
FOR A UNIQUE SYMPHONIC EXPERIENCE !**

WWW.FESTIVALBERLIOZ.COM

west | cork | music

WEST CORK CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL 2017

BANTRY, CO. CORK, IRELAND
FRIDAY 30 JUNE – SATURDAY 8 JULY

Invited artists include:

HENNING KRAGGERUD	DANA ZEMTSOV
VIVIANE HAGNER	JOHANNES MOSER
TAMSIN WALEY-COHN	CAMILLE THOMAS
MIRANDA CUCKSON	PACIFICA QUARTET
MAIRÉAD HICKEY	& MANY MORE

FOR UPDATES AND FURTHER INFORMATION VISIT

www.westcorkmusic.ie



Amiata Piano Festival 2017

FORUM FONDAZIONE BERTARELLI
APPUNTAMENTO CON
LA GRANDE MUSICA

Preview Concert 20 May
Baccus 22-23-24-25 June
Euterpe 27-28-30 July
Dionisus 24-25-26-27 August
Christmas Concert 8-9 December

POGGI DEL SASSO - CINIGIANO (GR) - ITALY
info / tickets + 39 339 4420336
www.amiatapianofestival.com

fb fondazione
bertarelli

Colle Massari

NEW ROSS PIANO FESTIVAL 2017

PRESENTING

KRISTIAN BEZUIDENHOUT / FINGHIN COLLINS
ZOLTÁN FEJÉRVÁRI / DAVID GREILSAMMER
ELIZAVETA UKRAINSKAIA / KLÁRA WÜRTZ

KRISTÓF BARÁTI violin / JENNIFER STUMM viola
ISTVÁN VÁRDAI cello

THURSDAY 21 to SUNDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

St. Mary's Church, New Ross, Co. Wexford, Ireland

Booking: 00353 51 421255 • www.newrosspianofestival.com



EUROPE FESTIVALS

Aix-en-Provence Festival

July 3-22

As ever, this major Provençal opera festival contains several new productions, most notably the opening world premiere: Philippe Boesmans' festival commission, *Pinocchio*, directed by Joël Pommerat and conducted by Emilio Pomarico with the Klangforum Wien. Later, Pablo Heras-Casado conducts the Orchestre de Paris in Dmitri Tcherniakov's new staging of Bizet's *Carmen*, featuring Stéphanie d'Oustrac and Michael Fabiano. Next is Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, led by Daniel Harding, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with Jérémie Rhorer conducting the English Voices and Le Cercle de l'Harmonie orchestra, and Cavalli's *Erismena* under Leonardo García Alarcón. The other opera production for 2017 is Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, conducted by Tugan Sokhiev.

festival-aix.com

Aix-en-Provence Easter Festival

April 10-23

This year Renaud Capuçon's festival hosts the launch of Sir John Eliot Gardiner's global Monteverdi opera trilogy tour, featuring the Monteverdi singers and orchestras in a concert staging of *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*. Other highlights include pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet who makes his festival debut in Mendelssohn's Concerto for Violin and Piano, joined by Capuçon and this year's resident orchestra, The Knights, led by Eric Jacobson. This year's Bach Passion is the St Matthew, Philippe Herreweghe conducting Collegium Vocale Gent and its

orchestra. The popular Brothers and Sisters strand also returns, 2017's siblings including Adrien and Christian-Pierre La Marca, Raphaëlle and Edgar Moreau, and Khatia and Gvantsa Buniatishvili.

festivalpaques.com/en/

Festival International de Piano de la Roque d'Anthéron

July 21 - August 19

Classic, contemporary, jazz and even electronic music centred around the piano are what to expect from this major French piano festival, with its impressive main concert space in the grounds of the Château de Florans. Artists include Evgeny Kissin, Nelson Freire, Arcadi Volodos, Grigory Sokolov, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Boris Beresovsky, Igor Levit, Nikolai Lugansky and Trio Wanderer.

festival-piano.com

Baltic Sea Festival

August 21-29

This Stockholm festival pays special attention to music from the Baltic Sea region, and to encouraging new generation musicians. This year, concerts are spread between the Berwaldhallen and The Royal Opera. Among the orchestras, ensembles, choirs and prominent soloists taking part are the Swedish Radio Symphony, Royal Swedish, Mariinsky Theatre, Helsinki Philharmonic, and Estonian Festival orchestras, with conductors Daniel Harding, Valery Gergiev, Paavo Järvi, Susanna Mälkki and Esa-Pekka Salonen.

balticseafestival.com

Beethovenfest Bonn

September 8 - October 1

Highlights this year include Ingo Metzmacher conducting the Gustav

Mahler Youth Orchestra and pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet in Gershwin's Concerto in F, in a programme also featuring Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin* Suite, and Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* Suite. This sits under a 'Love Fulfilled, Love Doomed' theme, while the Russian Revolution anniversary is marked by a 'Russian Beethoven' programme from the hr-Sinfonieorchester under Andrés Orozco-Estrada with Stravinsky's *Petrushka* Suite alongside a new work from Vladimir Tarnopolski, and Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 4 with Khatia Buniatishvili. Sébastien Rouland and Les Musiciens du Louvre also visit this year.

en.beethovenfest.de

Bergen International Festival

May 24 - June 7

Two weeks where one of the oldest cities in Norway, set against a dramatic backdrop of fjords, showcases the best of Norwegian arts and the wider northern European scene. This year music director Edward Gardner conducts the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra in a concert staging of Britten's *Peter Grimes*, with Stuart Skelton in the title-role. Mid-festival highlights include operatic duets from Norwegian singers Mari Eriksmoen and Johannes Weisser, accompanied by the Baroque ensemble B'Rock under René Jacobs. The festival closes with John Storgårds conducting the Bergen Philharmonic in Grieg's Piano Concerto with soloist Joachim Carr, followed by Tim Rushton's contemporary *Firebird* staging, complete with video projections, presented by Danish Dance Theatre.

fib.no

Berliner Klavier Festival

May 16-31

Founded in 2012, the festival aims to present some of the world's great pianists whom, for whatever reason, aren't part of the Berlin scene or big-label PR machinery, and to offer recitals in a more intimate environment - they take place in the small hall of Berlin's Konzerthaus, which seats just under 400 and has an excellent acoustic. This year's recitalists are Christian Zacharias, Eliso Virsaladze, Francesco Piemontesi and Beatrice Rana.

berliner-klavierfestival.de

Festival Berlioz

August 18 - September 3

The festival is held in Hector Berlioz's birthplace town of La Côte Saint-André, near Grenoble, with main concerts in the hilltop Château Louis XI. This year's theme is

'So British: Berlioz in London' marking Berlioz's appointment as France's representative to the international commission as an examiner of musical instruments at London's 1851 Universal Exhibition. Berlioz-themed highlights include John Eliot Gardiner and his Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique in *La Damnation de Faust*, a *Concert Shakespeareien* conducted by François-Xavier Roth, and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France under Roger Norrington in Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été* and *Symphonie fantastique*. Also worth catching are Marc Minkowski's Musiciens du Louvre, performing Handel's Water and Royal Fireworks Music.

festivalberlioz.com

Chopin and His Europe International Music Festival

August 12-30

This Warsaw-based festival presents, for its 13th edition, the theme 'From Bach to Chopin', with programmes revolving around the multi-layered relationship between the two composers. Historical performance is a focus, with appearances by Europa Galante, the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra and Il Giardino Armonico. There are also recitals from high-profile pianists including Nelson Freire, Nelson Goerner and Nicholas Angelich.

festival.nifc.pl/en/

Chorégies d'Orange

June 19 - August 5

This opera festival takes place in the awe-inspiring 8300-seat ancient Roman Théâtre Antique d'Orange near Avignon. This year opens with a gala concert of opera solos, choruses, operetta and French chanson and more, broadcast live by the popular French television programme *Musiques en fête*. Later there's a Mozart recital from Florian Sempey and Jeff Cohen, productions of Verdi's *Rigoletto* and *Aida*, and Bryn Terfel performing his *Bad Boys* programme with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, who later perform Beethoven's Symphony No 9 under Myung Whun Chung. Holst's *The Planets* also features, complete with projected images, Jesko Sirvend conducting the National Orchestra of France.

choregies.fr

Dresden Music Festival

May 18 - June 18

'Light' is the theme for the 40th year of this festival, under the artistic direction of cellist Jan Vogler. Visiting artists and ensembles

PREMIERE FOCUS

Bregenz Festival

July 19 - August 20

Operas that take place on the picturesque lake stage this year include the world premiere of a new chamber opera, *To the Lighthouse*, by Zesses Seglias, Bizet's *Carmen*, Rossini's *Mosè in Egitto*, and Mozart's *Il nozze di Figaro* performed by the young singers of the festival's opera studio. There's also a 90-minute staging of Wagner's *Ring* cycle by Hotel Modern and the Netherlands Wind Ensemble, and orchestral concerts from the Vorarlberg Symphony Orchestra, and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra under Antonio Méndez, Philippe Jordan and Constantinos Carydis.

bregenzerfestspiele.com



Bregenz Festival's famous floating stage



RENCONTRES MUSICALES D'ÉVIAN

1^{er} - 9 juillet 2017

GRANGE AU LAC - ÉVIAN - FRANCE

JULY 4 2017 - 20H

Gustavo Dudamel
Mahler Chamber Orchestra
Edgar Moreau

TRIBUTE TO ROSTROPOVICH

WWW.RENCONTRES-MUSICALES-EVIAN.FR

stresa festival

56th International Festival

Artistic Director Gianandrea Noseda

18 July – 8 September 2017



Classical music and Jazz on the Lake Maggiore - Italy

stresafestival.eu | boxoffice@stresafestival.eu | +39.0323.31095

Itinéraire Baroque

Artistic Direction **Ton Koopman**

Musical promenade along the romanesque
churches in the Périgord vert
with renowned baroque musicians

May 13th

July 27th to July 30th

2017

info & tickets +33 5 5390 0513 | www.itinerairebaroque.com

Pärnu
Music Festival

10/08-17/08/2017
Pärnu, Estonia

Paavo Järvi, Neeme Järvi
Radu Lupu, Lisa Batiashvili
Estonian Festival Orchestra



www.parnumusicfestival.ee

include the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Vladimir Jurowski, who perform both with pianist Jan Lisiecki and cellist Steven Isserlis. Vogler himself performs Britten's Cello Symphony with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, while another highlight is Leonidas Kavakos with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra. The opening concert in the Semperoper features Anne-Sophie Mutter in Bruch's Violin Concerto along with Takemitsu's *Nostalgia*, Fabio Luisi conducting the Philharmonia Zurich. musikfestspiele.com

Gent Festival of Flanders

September 17 – October 1

Violinist Vadim Repin opens this year's festival performing Sibelius's Violin Concerto with the Beethoven Orchester Bonn, in a concert that also features Mahler's Symphony No 1. Other classical highlights include Ton Koopman conducting the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra in Saint Bavo's Cathedral, and the Apollon Musagète Quartet performing a programme of Arensky, Penderecki and Shostakovich in the Handelsbeurs Concert Hall. gentfestival.be

Göttingen International Handel Festival

May 11-28

'Faith and Doubt' is the theme this year, with Venezuelan director Carlos Wagner's new staging of *Lotario* the main operatic event at the Deutsches Theater Göttingen, with the festival's resident orchestra conducted by the event's artistic director, Laurence Cummings. They also perform the opening gala concert starring Canadian soprano Dominique Labelle. The *Brookes Passion* forms a moving climax to the programme, with the 500 years since the Reformation also being marked by a 'Luther's Lute' programme at Kloster Walkenried (Martin Luther played the lute) from countertenor Franz Vitzthum and lutenist Julian Behr. Other highlights are a recital from mandolinist Avi Avital, and a first foray into operatic conducting from recorder player Dorothee Oberlinger: a semi-staged performance of *Lucio Cornelio Silla*. haendel-festspiele.de

Grafenegg Festival

August 18 – September 10

Under the artistic direction of Austria's pre-eminent pianist Rudolf Buchbinder, this 'Austrian Tanglewood' takes place in the grounds of Grafenegg Castle just outside Vienna. This year's festival opens with a concert staging of Weber's *Der Freischütz*, Yutaka Sado conducting the Tonkünstler Orchestra with a soloist line-up that includes Dorothea Röschmann, Daniela Fally, Michael König, Daniel Schmutzhard and Adrian Eröd.

Other highlights of the festival include Buchbinder playing Brahms's Piano Concerto No 1 with the St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra under Yuri Temirkanov, Maxim Vengerov performing the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra conducted by Long Yu, and a recital from soprano Anja Harteros. grafenegg.com

Herrenchiemsee Festival

July 18-30

'The Baroque world: the time of a new beginning!' is the theme of this year's Herrenchiemsee Festival, which takes place in the Castle's Spiegelsaal and in the monastery of the Fraueninsel. That doesn't mean that the musical offerings are only confined to the Baroque repertoire. Highlights include artistic director Enoch zu Guttenberg conducting two major sacred choral works over the course of one evening: Mozart's *Great Mass in C minor* and Bach's *Magnificat*. Other notable concerts are Clemens Schuldt conducting The Munich Chamber Orchestra in a programme of Haydn, Liszt and Britten, and a recital from pianist Gerhard Oppitz which includes works by Grieg, Franck and Brahms. herrenchiemsee-festspiele.de

Incontri in Terra di Siena

July 29 – August 5

Founded by cellist and UCLA professor Antonio Lysy, the festival's concerts take place in the courtyard of his family's Tuscan garden estate, Incontri in Terra di Siena, and at the nearby medieval castle Castelluccio and venues throughout the Val d'Orcia region. This year pianist Alessio Bax begins a three-year term as artistic director, and the roster of artists he's put together has certainly cranked up the festival big-name offerings by a gear. Performers include pianists Lucille Chung and Dan Tepfer, violinists Joshua Bell and Henning Kraggerud, viola player Lawrence Power, cellist Paul Watkins, mezzo Sarah Connolly and the Escher Quartet. Following the main festival in Tuscany, this year also features two further concerts on August 9 and 12 at the Schloss Elmau in the Bavarian Alps. itslafoce.org, schloss-elmau.de

Indian Summer in Levoča

September 8-12

The international festival takes place at the Unesco World Heritage town of Levoča, Slovakia, in the town's historic theatre, its Congress Hall and its Black Church. Visiting artists for 2017 include the Vienna Piano Trio, the Zemlinsky Quartet, harpist Kateřina Englichová, flautist Carlo Jans, clarinetist Jan Mach, pianist Jonathan Powell, and the Slovak Sinfonietta under Theodore Kuchar. iblfestival.eu

PREMIERE FOCUS

Gstaad Menuhin Festival



The Kammerorchester Basel performing at the Gstaad Menuhin Festival

July 13 – September 2

Yehudi Menuhin founded the Gstaad Festival in 1957, and these days it's a star-studded and many-stranded affair. There's the Chamber Music Festival, the Festive strand, which presents concerts and opera, then Extra Music gives concerts in unusual locations, such as alpine huts and railway stations. This year Jaap van Zweden takes over as director of the Conducting Academy and the Gstaad Festival Orchestra. Under the overarching 2017 theme of *Pomp in Music*, highlights include three cartes blanches concerts from violinist Vilde Frang, violinist Isabelle Faust and pianist Alexander Melnikov who perform Beethoven's 10 violin sonatas over three concerts, a concert performance of Verdi's *Aida* from the London Symphony Orchestra with soloists Roberto Alagna and Erwin Schrott, and Cecilia Bartoli singing the world premiere of her new album with cellist Sol Gabetta. gstaadmenuhinfestival.ch

Innsbruck Festival of Early Music

September 8-10

The 2017 festival celebrates Monteverdi's 450th anniversary, and strong women in music. Christina Pluhar, Vincenzo Capezzuto and Teatro d'Amore open the festival at Ambras Castle with a programme of Monteverdi, Cazzati and Strozzi. Monteverdi celebrations continue with a performance of *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, conducted by Alessandro De Marchi, with a cast including Christine Rice. Another highlight is a new production of Rameau's ballet-opera *Pygmalion*; Christophe Rousset, Les Talens Lyriques, NovoCanto and the cast are joined by the Compagnie Les Cavatines with new choreography from Natalie van Parys. altemusik.at/en

International Chamber Music Festival Utrecht: Harriet Krijgh and Friends

June 28 – July 2

For the past decade, this five-day festival hosted by Utrecht's TivoliVredenburg has been under the artistic direction of violinist Janine Janson. However this year she steps down, handing over the reins to cellist Harriet Krijgh. Full programme details are announced on April 1. kammermuziekfestival.nl

Istanbul Music Festival

May 29 – June 21

The 45th Istanbul Music Festival is themed 'Unusual', and ways in which its 25 concerts meet the brief include two multimedia projects, a circus-ballet from CIRCA, a Turkish music concert at the famous

Grand Bazaar, and three crossover projects including a sampled Baroque performance by Musica Sequenza. Philip Glass's Symphony No 11, a festival co-commission, will feature in a concert of his music. Visiting ensembles include the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, while a chamber highlight will be violinist Tedi Papavrami, cellist Xavier Phillips, and pianist François-Frédéric Guy in concert. Among the other soloists appearing are pianists Fazil Say and Herbert Schuch, and baritone Matthias Goerne. muzik.iksv.org/en

Itinéraire Baroque

July 27 – July 30

Taking place in various churches around the Dordogne, Ton Koopman's Baroque festival marks the 250th anniversary of Telemann's death this year. Visiting ensembles and artists include the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra and Choir, soprano Bettina Pahn, countertenor Maarten Engeltjes and choreographer Hubert Hazebroucq. The festival will also include discussion panels and talks over its four-day duration. itinerairebaroque.com

Kissinger Sommer

June 16 – July 16

Held in the Bavarian city of Bad Kissingen, this festival features the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen as its resident orchestra. 2017 sees mezzo Vessellina Kasarova and violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja as artists-in-residence, performing several times over the course of the festival. Other highlights include pianist Grigory Sokolov pairing Mozart and Beethoven

OPERA

MAGYAR ÁLLAMI OPERAHÁZ
HUNGARIAN STATE OPERA

First of All

NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS ON SALE

27 MARCH – 30 JUNE
OPERA HOUSE

TOUR!

ERTSÉBET ZSUZSANNA HUTÁS, MIHÁLY KÖNYVES TÓTH
members of the orchestra

DIANA DÖBÖRHEGYI, DRESZT BODNÁP S.
members of the choir

2017
I8

www.opera.hu
www.facebook.com/Operahaz

sonatas, Andrés Orozco-Estrada conducting the hr-Sinfonieorchester in Schumann's Piano Concerto with Kirill Gerstein, Thomas Zehetmair playing Paganini's *24 Caprices*, and a Liszt and Chopin piano recital from Khatia Buniatishvili.

kissingersommer.de

Lavaux Classic

June 23 – July 2

This Swiss festival takes place in and around the vineyards of the Lavaux region, with Cully as its base, and presents more than 50 concerts over 10 days. In addition to the main programme there are free open-air events, in a focus on decompartmentalising classical music; initiatives include vineyard walks punctuated by pop-up musical performances, plus local produce tasting sessions. The full programme is announced in April.

lavauxclassic.ch

Lofoten Piano Festival

July 10-16

Set against the spectacular scenery of Norway's Lofoten islands, this festival alternates between piano and chamber music. This year it's the turn of chamber; performers across its seven days include the Enggard Quartet, Quatour Danel, horn player Radovan Vlatković, and pianists Nils Mortensen, Olli Mustonen and Lise de la Salle.

lofotenfestival.no

Lucerne Summer Festival

August 11 – September 10

This year's festival – which comprises more than 100 concerts over four weeks – opens with an all-Strauss programme by the Lucerne Festival Orchestra under its director Riccardo Chailly. Other highlights across the month include soprano Miah Persson performing the Swiss premiere of Michel van der Aa's chamber opera, *Blank Out*, for soprano and 3D film. The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra under Daniel Barenboim bring two programmes to the festival, one including Shostakovich's Concerto for Piano, Trumpet and Strings with pianist Martha Argerich and trumpeter Bassam Mussad. Among other visiting artists are violinists Maxim Vengerov and Leonidas Kavakos, pianist Maurizio Pollini, the Spiegel Trio, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra under François-Xavier Roth with violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja and Daniel Harding and the Vienna Philharmonic.

lucernefestival.ch

MA Festival, Bruges

August 4-13

This imaginative early music festival takes place in historic Bruges and surrounding areas. The theme this year is *The Divine Comedy*, taking Dante's masterpiece as its inspiration. Highlights this year

include Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* under the baton of Leonardo García Alarcón, Marc-Antoine Charpentier's chamber opera *Orphée en Enfer* performed by Ensemble Correspondances under Sébastien Daucé, and Baroque ensemble B'Rock playing Boccherini's Symphony No 6 'La casa del diavolo'. The festival concludes with 'Vélo Baroque', which combines a bicycle tour through the Bruges woodland and wetland with performances of early music in unexpected places.

mafestival.be

Malta International Music Festival

April 12-30

This year's festival focus is on the piano. Distinguished pianists making their debuts in Malta include Grigory Sokolov, Jan Lisiecki and Andrey Gugin; other artists appearing include viola player David Aaron Carpenter, the Khatachurian Trio, conductor Constantine Orbelian and composers-in-residence Karl Fiorini, Alexey Shor and Joseph Vella. The festival also hosts a piano competition and masterclasses.

maltafest.eu

Festival de Musique de Menton

July 29 – August 14

Established in 1950, this French Riviera festival is one of Europe's oldest and most prestigious festivals, attracting big names each year. Musicians for 2017 hadn't been announced as we went to press, but it's without doubt worth keeping an eye on the festival's website for when the programme goes live.

festival-musique-menton.fr

Moritzburg Festival

August 5-20

A Dresden-based festival under the artistic directorship of cellist Jan Vogler, the Moritzburg Festival has established itself as one of the most renowned international chamber music festivals since its inception in 1993. The idea is for established and young musicians to rehearse and then perform chamber music together in atmospheric venues such as the Moritzburg and Proschwitz castles, and Dresden's Transparent Factory of Volkswagen. In its 25th anniversary year, the festival has attracted a group of internationally renowned soloists such as Lise de la Salle, Alessio Bax, Baiba Skride, Alexander Sitkovetsky, Lawrence Power, Richard O'Neill and Felix Klieser among others. Highlights for 2017 include the celebratory concerts on August 11 and 12, held in Moritzburg Castle and in the open air around the castle's pond; also the 'Italian Night' at Proschwitz Castle and the 'Music Picnic' in the castle's garden.

moritzburgfestival.de/en

PREMIERE FOCUS

Munich Opera Festival

June 24 – July 31

Five premieres stand as the centrepiece of the Bavarian State Opera's festival this year, which offers concerts, song and ballet evenings alongside its operatic



The National Theatre in Munich

productions. As well as the two festival premieres, Franz Schreker's *Die Gezeichneten* and Weber's *Oberon*, or *The Elf King's Oath*, there will be two further productions as part of the Festival Workshop in June: Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Greek* and *[catarsi]*, the latter being an evening of operatic theatre from the artist collective AGORA. Then, for the first time in many years, the State Ballet will also present a festival premiere: An Evening of Ballet – Young Choreographers. The programme includes all the new productions from the 2016/17 Season.

staatsoper.de

Musique Cordiale

July 29 – August 12

This festival comprises orchestral concerts, song and oratorio performed in medieval hill towns between Nice and Aix-en-Provence. Running alongside the concerts is the Musique Cordiale Strings Academy for advanced string players, led by Levon Chilingirian and Susie Mészáros. Concert highlights for 2017 include Graham Ross conducting the festival choir, orchestra and soloists in Monteverdi's *Vespers*, and James Lowe conducting Poulenc's *L'Histoire de Babar le petit éléphant* in a programme that also features orchestral works by Ravel.

musique-cordiale.com

New Ross Piano Festival

September 21-24

It's Hungarian Year for the festival hosted in the Irish port town of New Ross. Amid the Hungarian repertoire from Liszt and Bartók, there's also music by composers such as Rachmaninov, Debussy and Beethoven. A particular highlight is a fortepiano recital by Kristian Bezuidenhout; other pianists include Finghin Collins, Dénés Várjon and Klára Würtz. One chamber work is performed at each of the main concerts, and the string players appearing include violinist Kristóf Báráti, viola player Jennifer Stumm and cellist István Várdai.

newrosspianofestival.com

Operadagen Rotterdam

May 12-21

Ten-day Operadagen (Opera Days) Rotterdam presents contemporary music theatre and opera productions, as well as intimate shows at unexpected locations throughout Rotterdam. This year features the world premiere of *Shorelines*, a production about

the North Sea flood of 1953 by the Ragazze Quartet, with music by Oliver Coates and directed by Josh Armstrong. Another highlight is the Lithuanian opera *Have a Good Day!* by Vaiva Grainytė, which explores the inner lives of cashiers in a shopping centre. Italian ensemble Cappella Mediterranea returns to the festival as well, marking the Monteverdi anniversary with a performance of *L'Orfeo*.

operadagenrotterdam.nl/en

Pärnu Music Festival

August 10-17

Now in its seventh year, the Pärnu Festival was founded by Paavo Järvi and his father Neeme in order to create a unique summer refuge on the Estonian coast for musicians, students and audiences alike. Visiting artists this year include Radu Lupu, Lisa Batiashvili and the Estonian Festival Orchestra.

parnumusicfestival.ee

Prague Spring Festival

May 12 – June 2

Daniel Barenboim opens the 2017 festival, conducting the Vienna Philharmonic in Smetana's *Má vlast*. Other highlights include Thomas Hengelbrock conducting the Orchestre de Paris, and two concerts from the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and its music director Peter Oundjian. Once again there's a focus on music from the Iberian regions, including ensemble Forma Antiqua performing 18th- and early 19th-century Spanish musical drama. The Chamber Music Weekend includes performances from violinist Vilde Frang and pianist Alexander Lonquich, the artist-in-residence. Composer Krzysztof Penderecki closes the festival, conducting his *Seven Gates of Jerusalem* symphony.

festival.cz/en

PREMIERE FOCUS

Savonlinna Opera Festival

July 7 - August 4

Operas at this Finnish festival take place amid the grounds of the city's medieval Olavinlinna castle. 2017 is a particularly special year because it marks the 100th anniversary of Finland becoming an independent Republic. The opening weekend very much reflects that, containing the world premiere of Aulis Sallinen's opera, *The Castle in the Water*, and a concert in Kerimäki Church from the Finnish YL Male Voice Choir and the young singers of the Tapiola Choir. Later, the Bolshoi Theatre visits with Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta* and a concert version of *Eugene Onegin*, while Teatro Real Madrid brings their productions of Bellini's *I puritani* and Sibelius's *Kullervo Symphony* to the festival, the latter in collaboration with the Savonlinna Opera Festival Choir. operafestival.fi/en



Savonlinna's magnificent Olavinlinna castle

Prague Summer Nights

June 12 - July 10

This festival gives young musicians the opportunity to perform concerts and opera, coached by professional artists. Operas in Prague and Salzburg include fully staged productions of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, directed by American baritone Sherrill Milnes and his wife, Maria Zouves, and *Die Zauberflöte*. Salzburg's Mozarteum hosts some concerts, then there's chamber music in Suk Hall at Prague's Rudolfinum, a song recital at Oskara Nedbala Theater, a programme of opera scenes at the Lichtenstein Palace, and a cabaret in Prague's jazz club, Reduta. praguesummernights.com

Rencontres-musicales d'Évian

July 1-9

This historic festival in Évian-les-Bains was recently resurrected and is now in its fourth season; its aim is to present chamber music in all its forms. Concerts take place in the 19th-century Casino Theatre facing Lake Geneva and La Grange du Lac, the auditorium built in 1993 during the tenure of the festival's former director Mstislav Rostropovich. This year's highlights include Nicholas Angelich playing Schumann with the festival's artistic directors, the Modigliani Quartet, violinist Ray Chen performing the Mendelssohn Concerto, Gustavo Dudamel and the Mahler Chamber Orchestra in a tribute to Rostropovich, and a recital by Evgeny Kissin. rencontres-musicales-evian.fr/en

Rheingau Musik Festival

June 24 - September 2

This extensive festival turns 30 this year, celebrating with 155 concerts held at scores of venues across the Rheingau and adjoining regions. The main venues are Eberbach Monastery, Johannisberg

Palace, Vollrads Palace and the Wiesbaden Assembly Rooms; these are supplemented by numerous churches and wineries. Among the many artists and ensembles performing are violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter, pianists Jan Lisiecki and Chilly Gonzales, conductors Valery Gergiev and Teodor Currentzis, the Munich Philharmonic and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Artist-in-residence for 2017 is pianist Igor Levit, performing repertoire from his *Gramophone* Award-winning Bach, Beethoven and Rzewski recording. This year's 'Focus on Jazz' strand spotlights pianist Michael Wolny, probably today's hottest German jazz pianist. rheingau-musik-festival.de

Salzburg Festival

July 21 - August 30

Mozart's birthplace becomes the scene for major operatic productions, theatrical productions and concerts each summer, operas mostly performed by the resident Vienna Philharmonic. Many of this year's works examine the subject of power. Among the operatic highlights are Riccardo Muti conducting the Vienna Philharmonic in Verdi's *Aida*, the title-role shared between Anna Netrebko and Vittoria Yeo, Vladimir Jurowski conducting Berg's *Wozzeck* with Matthias Goerne in the title-role, and Franz Welser-Möst conducting Reimann's *Lear*, starring Gerald Finley. A Baroque highlight will be Handel's *Ariodante*, Diego Fasolis conducting Monaco's Les Musiciens du Prince. Concert highlights include Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla conducting Salzburg's Estnische Philharmonische Kammerchor and Mozarteumorchester in a programme featuring Bruckner's Mass in E minor, with Christiane Karg among the soloists. salzburgfestival.at

Schubertiade Hohenems

Angelika Kauffmann Hall:

May 4-7, July 13-16, October 5-8

Schubertiade Schwarzenberg

Markus Sittikus Hall: June 17-25,

August 25 - September 3

Generally considered to be the most important Schubert festival in the world, this intimate alpine festival presents a multitude of events across two different venues, encompassing song recitals, piano recitals, chamber and orchestral concerts, lectures, exhibitions and masterclasses. Artists appearing this year include Cuarteto Casals, Quatuor Ebène, baritone Ian Bostridge with pianist Lars Vogt, soprano Christiane Karg with pianist Andreas Staier, and violinist Baiba Skride performing with cellist Sol Gabetta and pianist Nelson Goerner. schubertiade.at

Stresa Festival

July: Midsummer Jazz Concerts

July: Musical Meditation - classical music

This Italian festival is based on Lake Maggiore, with events taken place in venues such as the Borromeo Palace on Isola Bella, the Loggia del Cashmere on Isola Madre, the Santa Caterina del Sasso Hermitage, and the Rocca Borromeo in Angera. stresafestival.eu

Trasimeno Music Festival

June 28 - July 4

Pianist Angela Hewitt's festival features eight concerts over seven days in atmospheric venues such as the Castle of the Knights of Malta in Magione, Chiesa di San Francesco in Trevi and Teatro Signorelli in Cortona. Highlights for 2017 include mezzo Anne Sofie von Otter who presents a crossover programme with the Brooklyn Rider quartet, and Canada's official 150th birthday is marked by four Canadian pianists - Hewitt herself, Janina Fialkowska, Charles Richard-Hamelin and Jon Kimura Parker - who perform in the same concert on four Fazioli pianos. Other visiting artists include the Zurich Chamber Orchestra under Roger Norrington, The Orlando Consort, clarinettist Alessandro Carbonare and the Gringolts Quartet. trasimenomusicfestival.com

Verbier Festival

July 21 - August 6

This Alpine festival mixes masterclasses with world-class chamber and symphonic performances. Charles Dutoit opens proceedings, conducting the Verbier Festival Orchestra in a concert staging of Strauss's *Salome*. Other highlights include a Schubert and Beethoven recital from violinist Renaud Capuçon and pianist Denis Kozhukhin, Beethoven and Rachmaninov from Evgeny Kissin, and a Bach concertos programme from the Verbier Festival Chamber

Orchestra under Roberto González-Monjas, with piano soloists Sergei Babayan, Daniil Trifonov and Yuja Wang. The closing concert features Janine Jansen playing Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with Mikhail Pletnev and the festival orchestra. verbierfestival.com

Verona Arena Opera Festival

June 23 - August 15

The Arena di Verona, the third largest Roman amphitheatre in the world, is the spectacular setting for this Italian opera festival. A new staging of Verdi's *Nabucco* opens 2017's offerings. There are two productions of Verdi's *Aida* this year; a contemporary staging by the Catalan group La Fura dels Baus, and Gianfranco de Bosio's recreation of the first stage design of 1913. More Verdi comes in the form of *Rigoletto*, there is also Puccini's *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly*. Other highlights are a gala performance from Plácido Domingo, and a ballet night from Roberto Bolle and Friends. arena.it

West Cork Chamber Music Festival

June 30 - July 8

The coastal town of Bantry in County Cork boasts its usual strong festival line-up. The opening concert features violinist Miranda Cuckson performing the world premiere of Sam Perkin's *Language* for solo violin. Visiting string quartets include the Quatuor Zaïde, Doric and Pavel Haas quartets. Other highlights are a celebration of the centenary of works by Debussy, Elgar and Respighi, and the Irish premiere of Shulamit Ran's *Glitter, doom, shards, memory* by Pacifica Quartet. The quartet later joins German cellist Johannes Moser for another Irish premiere, of Julia Wolfe's String Quintet *Splendid Hopes*. The finale in Bantry House includes sextets by Connession, Penderecki and Dvořák. A new festival fringe features a selection of musicians including Ensemble Dagda and Voice Trio. westcorkmusic.ie

Zeist Music Days

August 12-26

Held in the central Netherlands town of Zeist, this chamber music festival offers a mix of concerts and masterclasses. Ensembles performing this year include the Artemis Quartet, Cuarteto Casals, the Bennewitz Quartet, Cuarteto Quiroga, the Kam-Porat Trio, and pianists Lucas and Arthur Jussen. Masterclasses are hosted by Cuarteto Casals, Cuarteto Quiroga, Ori Kam, clarinettist Sharon Kam and pianist Matan Porat, among others. These are followed by a student concert tour. zeistmusicdays.nl zeistermuziekdagen.nl

**Bruges?
Sounds
great!**

Inspired by
classical music

www.brugessoundsgreat.com

La Divina Commedia **Between heaven and hell** *MAfestival 2017*

Fri 04 – Sun 13.08.2017

Concertgebouw Bruges

MAfestival 2017 is dedicated to Dante's *La Divina Commedia*. The literary, intellectual and spiritual wealth of this iconic poem is honored in a quest for the musical echoes and connotations of the three stages of Dante's journey: Inferno, Purgatorio and Paradiso.

Visit Bruges and discover classical music

Thu	04.05.17	Anima Eterna Brugge <i>Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings</i>
Thu	11.05.17	Symfonieorkest Vlaanderen – Abentrot
Fri	12.05.17	Collegium Vocale Gent – Bach. Mass in B minor
Thu-Sat	18 – 20.05.17	Budapest Festival 2017 <i>Bartók in three innovative performances</i>
Fri	02.06.17	B'Rock & René Jacobs – Mozart. Love and lust

MARLBORO MUSIC

mitsuko uchida, artistic director



"The classical world's most coveted retreat." —*The New Yorker*

Five Special Weekends

Marlboro, VT—Two Hours from Boston

July 15–August 13

www.marlbormusic.org

15% off tickets with code: GRAMOPHONE

Alfred Brendel
Patron

Sir András Schiff
President

Marios Papadopoulos MBE
Artistic Director

Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra

Oxford Piano Festival
30 July - 7 August 2017

2017 Faculty

Saleem Ashkar

Alfred Brendel

Yefim Bronfman

Richard Goode

Ian Jones

John Lill

Marios Papadopoulos

Menahem Pressler

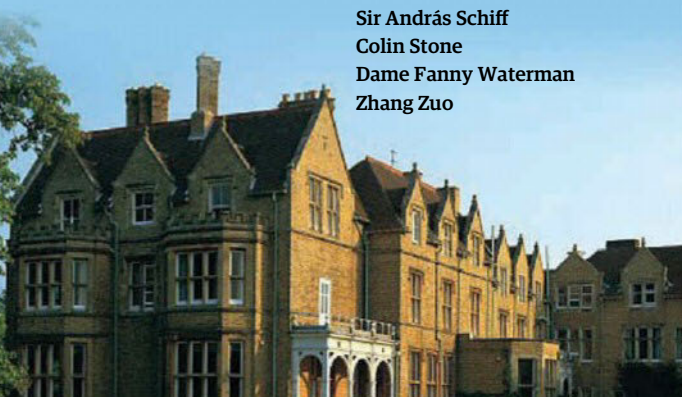
Paul Roberts

Sir András Schiff

Colin Stone

Dame Fanny Waterman

Zhang Zuo



FESTIVAL Opéra DE QUÉBEC



ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND GENERAL MANAGER
GRÉGOIRE LEGENDRE

24 JULY TO 5 AUGUST 2017

LOUIS RIEL /
HARRY SOMERS
A GREAT CANADIAN
HISTORICAL OPERA
DON GIOVANNI /
MOZART

THE OPERA STUDIO

SHAKESPEARE AT
THE OPERA

A LECTURE CONCERT

BAROQUE OPERA CONCERT

WITH LES VIOLONS DU ROY

THE LYRIC BRIGADE

IN QUEBEC CITY'S PARKS

OPERA CONCERT UNDER THE STARS

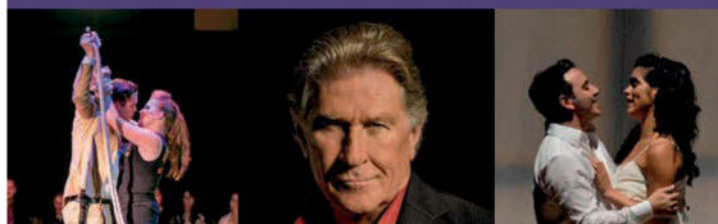
CHILDREN OPERA

IT'S A RENDEZ- VOUS!

FESTIVALOPERAQUEBEC.COM



JOIN OPERA LEGEND **SHERRILL MILNES** FOR THE 5TH ANNUAL



SAVANNAH VOICE FESTIVAL
OPERA | MUSICAL THEATRE | SONG
AUGUST 5 - 27, 2017

TICKETS ON SALE IN MAY

www.SavannahVOICEFestival.org | 855.76.OPERA

GRAMOPHONE

Are you interested in
advertising in Gramophone?

call +44 207 501 6368 or
email esther.zuke@markallengroup.com

NORTH AMERICA FESTIVALS

Aspen Music Festival and School

June 29 – August 20

The 69th season of this festival presents more than 400 orchestral concerts, recitals, operas, masterclasses and family events. Music director Robert Spano leads a season themed 'Enchantment'; themed works include Stravinsky's *Firebird* Suite and *Petrushka*, Dukas's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, and a concert version of Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges*. Guest artists include soprano Renée Fleming, violinists Sarah Chang, Sergey Khachatryan, Robert McDuffie and Gil Shaham, pianists Inon Barnatan, Yefim Bronfman, Marc-André Hamelin, Conrad Tao and Jean-Yves Thibaudet, plus singer-songwriter Rufus Wainwright. aspenmusicfestival.com

Bard SummerScape

June 30 – August 20

Taking place in New York's Hudson Valley, with many performances given in the Frank Gehry-designed Richard B Fisher Center, the 2017 festival's theme is a focus on the music of Chopin and his contemporaries, complemented by lectures, panel discussions and other special events. Non-Chopin events include artistic director Leon Botstein conducting the American Symphony Orchestra in five performances of Dvořák's *Dimitrij*. The Spiegeltent also returns, with cabaret, jazz and other offerings. fishercenter.bard.edu/summerscape

Blossom Music Festival

July 1 – September 3

The Cleveland Orchestra's annual summer festival takes place at Ohio's Blossom Music Center.

Highlights include music director Franz Welser-Möst conducting three concerts: Beethoven's Symphony No 2 and Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, an evening of opera favourites, and a programme of Beethoven, Milhaud, and Roussel; Loras John Schissel leading the Blossom Festival Band for a July 4th star-spangled celebration; and a 100th birthday tribute to Ella Fitzgerald. The festival concludes with three showings of Steven Spielberg's *ET The Extra-Terrestrial*, the John Williams score performed live by the Cleveland Orchestra. clevelandorchestra.com

Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music

July 30 – August 12

This festival champions newly written works, with rehearsals open to the public. This year celebrates the inaugural season of music director Cristian Măcelaru. A fast-rising star of the conducting world, Romanian-born Măcelaru succeeds longtime music director Marin Alsop, who stepped down after her 25th anniversary last season. Măcelaru leads the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra in works by Clarice Assad, David T Little, Cindy McTee, Karim Al-Zand, Gabriella Smith and Michael Gandolfi, among others. cabrillomusic.org

Caramoor

June 17 – July 30

This seven week multi-genre festival is based at the historic Caramoor estate in Katonah, Westchester, with its Italianate architecture and picnic-friendly gardens. Artists-in-residence for 2017 are guitarist Jason Vieaux and soprano Angela Meade, who stars in a semi-staged production of Bellini's *Il pirata*.

Other highlights include the resident Orchestra of St Luke's appearing under the baton of Bernard Labadie, who makes his Caramoor debut. Daniil Trifonov also makes his debut, and fellow pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet a return visit. Chamber music includes a performance by the Escher Quartet. caramoor.org

Carmel Bach Festival

July 15-29

In its 80th year, this Californian festival is under the artistic direction of Paul Goodwin. The festival has its own resident chamber orchestra made up of modern and period instruments (the only one of its kind in the States), a professional Festival Choral and a voluntary community chorus. Unsurprisingly, 2017 opens in celebratory fashion, with Bach's 'Ascension Oratorio' paired with Purcell's Birthday *Ode to Queen Mary*. A mid-festival highlight sees Bulgarian and Celtic folk music mixed with Vivaldi and Torelli, before the closing concert presents Beethoven's Symphony No 9 with Brahms's *Haydn* Variations. bachfestival.org

Glimmerglass Festival

July 7 – August 21

Every summer, the Glimmerglass Festival presents four productions of opera and musical theatre at its lakeside theatre in the heart of New York. Highlights for 2017 include Handel's *Xerxes* and new Glimmerglass productions of Donizetti's rarely heard *The Siege of Calais*, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, and Derrick Wang's one-act comic opera *Scalia/Ginsburg*. Another highlight of the programme is a new production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* The festival also premieres the 'hip-hopera' *Stomping Grounds* and youth opera *Robin Hood*. glimmerglass.org

Grand Teton Music Festival

July 3 – August 20

Under the leadership of music director Donald Runnicles, this festival unites musicians from the nation's top ensembles, along with big-name soloists, for seven weeks of orchestral and chamber music in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Visiting artists this year include cellist Yo-Yo Ma, pianists Yefim Bronfman and Garrick Ohlsson, and violinists James Ehnes and Augustin Hadelich. gtmf.org

Interlochen Arts Camp

June 24 – August 6

Michigan-based Interlochen Arts Camp combines concerts with an

educational programme. This year the focus is on Eastern art, and highlights over the six week duration include the World Youth Symphony Orchestra performing with conductors Karina Canellakis, making her ICA debut, JoAnn Falletta, Cristian Macelaru, Carlos Izcaray and Jung-Ho Pak. In keeping with the Asian theme, there will be a programme including Zhou Long's *Tsingtao Overture*, and Tan Dun's *Internet Symphony*, as well as John Adams works. Other composers featured include Ravel, Howard Hanson and Rimsky-Korsakov. interlochen.org

International Piano Festival, Princeton University

July 10-15

This piano festival runs in tandem with the Golandsky Institute's summer symposium, providing the evening's entertainment after the symposium's lectures, lessons and masterclasses on the Taubman Approach. Concerts this year include Grammy-winning pianist Bill Charlap with his jazz trio and Josu de Solaun, first prizewinner of the XIII George Enescu International Piano Competition, performing four-hands repertoire with Anna Petrova. Claudio Martínez Mehner, Sean Duggan and Ilya Itin round out the week. golandskyinstitute.org

June in Buffalo

June 5-11

This is a festival and conference dedicated to composers. It offers an intensive schedule of lectures, workshops and open rehearsals as well as concerts open to the general public and critics. Each of the invited composers has one piece performed during the festival. Evening performances feature faculty composers, resident ensembles and soloists renowned internationally as interpreters of contemporary music. This year's resident ensembles include Dal Niente, Slee Sinfonietta, and Ensemble Signal. Senior/faculty composers include David Dzubay, Brian Ferneyhough, and Norwegian composers Eivind Buene and Henrik Hellstenius. Special guests to the festival are violinist Irvine Arditti and conductor Brad Lubman. music21c.org

Lincoln Center Festival

July 10-30

Celebrating its 21st consecutive season, the festival features 43 international dance, music and theatre performances in multiple venues on and off the Lincoln Center campus. Music is

PREMIERE FOCUS

Bravo! Vail Music Festival

June 22 – August 3

Led by artistic director Anne-Marie McDermott, the Bravo! Vail Music Festival celebrates its 30th season with the return of its longtime resident ensembles the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic, as well as the second annual residency of London-based chamber orchestra the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. This season, Jaap van Zweden and Alan Gilbert conduct in their final Vail concerts as music directors of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and New York Philharmonic respectively. Five commissioned works receive their world and Bravo! Vail premieres. There are appearances from world-renowned soloists, plus innovative chamber concerts and delightful family programmes, all played against spectacular settings throughout the Vail Valley in Colorado. bravovail.org



Bravo! Vail boasts spectacular views

represented by a multi-part tribute to jazz great Ornette Coleman; *Cloud River Mountain*, a world premiere collaboration between noted Chinese singer Gong Linna and Bang on a Can All-Stars; Morton Subotnick's pioneering electronic work *Silver Apples of the Moon*; and 'Nomadic Nights', a world music series featuring five boundary-crossing ensembles. The centrepiece of dance offerings is the 50th-anniversary celebration of the premiere of George Balanchine's *Jewels*, performed by dancers of New York City Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet and the Bolshoi Ballet.

lincolncenterfestival.org

Marlboro Music

July 15 - August 13

With pianist Mitsuko Uchida as music director and Brett Dean as composer-in-residence, this rural Vermont chamber festival gives young professional musicians the opportunity to collaborate with established artists in a mentoring relationship. Programmes are selected by the musicians themselves from the 75 works explored in depth. After three weeks of daily rehearsals, the 80 resident artists present the results of their collaborations in 12 public concerts over five weekends.

marlboromusic.org

Mostly Mozart Festival

July 25 - August 20

Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival, a summertime tradition in New York, enters its sixth decade in 2017 under the leadership of artistic director Jane Moss and music director Louis Langrée. Among this year's highlights is the Budapest Festival Orchestra's acclaimed production of *Don Giovanni*, directed and conducted by Iván Fischer, which was a highlight of the 2011 festival.

mostlymozart.org

Music Academy of the West

June 12 - August 5

This beachside festival auditions students from around the world, who then spend a summer performing and studying with a faculty that includes leading soloists and principals from international orchestras. It turns 70 this year and the celebratory concert given by the New York Philharmonic, which also marks Alan Gilbert's last appearance with the orchestra, will be the largest classical music event in Santa Barbara's history. The 2017 opera is Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*, while an ongoing commissioning programme launches with 10 world and West Coast premieres, from composers including Moshe Hough and Joe Tompkins.

musicacademy.org

Music@Menlo Chamber Music Festival & Institute

July 14 - August 5

Under the artistic directorship of David Finckel and Wu Han, this California festival offers concerts alongside a chamber music institute for young and emerging professional musicians. This year's focus is 'The Glorious Violin', exploring how violin players and makers have shaped the evolution of music itself. Artists giving public concerts include violinist Benjamin Beilman and the Escher String Quartet.

musicatmenlo.org

Ravinia Festival

June 2017 - September 2017

Ravinia is North America's oldest outdoor music festival and has been home to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's summer residency since 1936. This year features 18 CSO concerts, culminating with Christoph Eschenbach, Ravinia's music director from 1994 to 2003, returning to conduct the CSO and Lang Lang in Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No 1, along with Dvořák's *Carnival Overture* and Symphony No 8. Other artists performing this year include conductors Susanna Mälkki and James Levine, pianists Yuja Wang, Simon Trpčeski and Nikolai Lugansky, violinist Joshua Bell and soprano Nadine Sierra.

ravinia.org

Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival

July 16 - August 21

Against the backdrop of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the festival presents six weeks of concerts, recitals, masterclasses and open rehearsals. Countertenor David Daniels is artist-in-residence for 2017, while concert highlights include violinist Rachel Barton-Pine playing Bach solo violin sonatas, and Kirill Gerstein performing *Prism*, Marc Neikrug's new work for solo piano. Also appearing are pianists Jonathan Biss and Inon Barnatan, and the Dover Quartet.

santafechambermusic.com

Ojai Music Festival

June 8-11

A different Music Director curates this southern California festival each year, and for the 71st Festival it's the turn of Vijay Iyer. Highlights include the world premiere of his Violin Concerto, written for and performed by Jennifer Koh. There's also the West Coast premiere of George Lewis' opera *Afterword*, and the world premiere of a chamber version of Courtney Bryan's *Yet Unheard*. Iyer is joined by a community of artists including Muhai Richard Abrams, Brentano Quartet, Claire Chase, International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) and Zakir Hussain among others.

ojai festival.org

PREMIERE FOCUS

Tippet Rise Art Center

July 7 - September 17

Based near Montana's Beartooth Mountains, Tippet Rise Art Center's music programme moves into its second year by expanding to nine weeks. Its main concert venue continues to be the 150-seat Olivier Music Barn, but there are also outdoor performances next to striking sculptural structures. Pre-concert lectures take place at



Music in unusual venues at Tippet Rise

Tiara, a 100-seat acoustic shell without walls. Concert highlights include the Tippet Rise debut of pianist Natasha Paremski in a solo recital of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* and more; she is later accompanied by the Escher String Quartet, also making a Tippet Rise debut. Returning artists include pianist Yevgeny Sudbin and violinist Caroline Goulding. The season also includes a new work by Aaron Jay Kernis performed by Pedja Muzijevic and cellist Matt Haimovitz, as the first premiere to result from a three-year commissioning programme.

tippetrise.org

Savannah Voice Festival

August 5-27

To celebrate its fifth year, this festival has been expanded to three weeks featuring three operas, concerts, masterclasses and special events directed by its founders, the legendary baritone Sherrill Milnes and his wife, soprano Maria Zouves. To launch the festival, there will be a preview of composer-in-residence Michael Ching's ghost opera, *Anna Hunter*. It is followed by *Le nozze di Figaro* and *il barbiere di Siviglia*.

savannahvoicefestival.org

Spoleto Festival May

May 26 - June 11

Charleston, South Carolina, is the location for this famous multi-arts festival. Highlights of its 41st year are three operas including a new production of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* directed by Chen Shi-Zheng, the US premiere of Vivaldi's 1727 opera *Farnace* directed by Garry Hynes and starring Anthony Roth Costanzo in the title role, and the US premiere of Italian Luca Francesconi's *Quartett*, conducted by resident conductor John Kennedy. The Bank of America Chamber Music series returns featuring works by 2017 composer-in-residence, Jaroslaw Kapuscinski; other musical offerings include Mozart's 'Great' Mass.

spoleto usa.org

Tanglewood

July 7 - August 27

Tanglewood is the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. BSO music director Andris Nelsons leads 10 programmes, including the BSO's first full concert performance of Wagner's *Das Rheingold*. Among the many highlights of this packed programme is the world premiere of

John Williams's *Markings*, with violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter, an opera gala with Kristine Opolais and Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Paul Lewis playing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 3, and Håkan Hardenberger and Thomas Rölfs performing the music of Mark-Anthony Turnage.

bso.org

REST OF THE WORLD

Singapore International Piano Festival

June 1-4

The theme for the 24th edition of this festival is 'Fantasies & Memories' and how the great piano composers musically interpreted those concepts. Over four nights, four world-class pianists explore the cornerstones of the repertoire: Wong Chiyan performs Mozart, Busoni, Chopin and Liszt; Steven Kovacevich plays Brahms, Chopin, Schumann and Beethoven; Joseph Moog plays Haydn, Chopin, Debussy and Liszt; and Hüseyin Sermet a programme including Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

pianofestival.com.sg

Argerich's Meeting Point Festival in Beppu

May 6-26

The 19th festival in Beppu, Japan, features such renowned musicians as cellist Mischa Maisky and violinist Ivry Gitlis, as well as Martha Argerich herself in performances with, among other ensembles, the Mito Chamber Orchestra under Seiji Ozawa (she performs Beethoven's First Piano Concerto). The event continues to strive towards its objective of creating a meeting point for people in Asia and around the world through classical music.

argerich-mf.jp/en



MUSIC DIRECTOR DONALD RUNNICLES

GRAND TETON MUSIC FESTIVAL

July 3 – August 20 in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, USA

Come See the Stars

TOP TEN ESSENTIAL CLASSICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL
- THE NEW YORK TIMES

FEATURING PERFORMANCES BY
CELLIST YO-YO MA
PIANIST YEFIM BRONFMAN
BROOKLYN RIDER AND MORE!

Tickets on sale now

gtmf.org
+1 307 733 1128

FEATURED ARTWORK BY JASON ROHLF AT DIEHL GALLERY

GRAMOPHONE

RECORDING OF THE MONTH

Lindsay Kemp is moved by John Eliot Gardiner's new Bach *St Matthew Passion*, a live recording that draws gloriously on the conductor's rich experience



JS Bach

St Matthew Passion, BWV244

James Gilchrist *ten* Evangelist **Stephan Loges** *bass*

Christus **Hannah Morrison**, **Zoë Brookshaw**,

Charlotte Ashley *sops* **Eleanor Minney** *contr*

Reginald Mobley *counterten* **Hugo Hymas** *ten*

Ashley Riches, **Alex Ashworth**, **Jonathan Sells**

basses **Monteverdi Choir**; **English Baroque**

Soloists / Sir John Eliot Gardiner

SDG ® ② SDG725 (161' • DDD • T/I)

Recorded live at Pisa Cathedral,

September 22, 2016



'What really makes this special is its emotional integrity, coming not from affected theatricality but from a pervading air of profound sadness'

in a 15-city tour which included a memorable performance in Brussels the day after the terror attacks there. The experience seems to have drawn the musicians together and intensified their

commitment. If a *Passion* performance has no sense of community it has nothing, and this is surely the making of Gardiner's account. This is a memorable and moving *St Matthew*, and for all the right reasons.

Musically it is very fine. The choir are excellent, of course, with a solid but clear and intimate sound even in the larger choruses, no end of expressive means in the chorales, and a thrilling quickness in the crowd choruses. Gardiner asks for a lot of quiet singing from them and they execute it with superbly controlled beauty. The orchestra is as skilled and musical as you like in their obbligatos, and exquisitely responsive to Gardiner's subtle shapings – the string accompaniments to Christus's recitatives, for instance, normally thought of as 'haloes', have never sounded so alert to the meaning of the Word. The experienced Evangelist of James Gilchrist and Christus of Stephan Loges are not to be faulted, and none of the nine young aria soloists is a weak link, to the extent that I'm loath to single out any one of them at the expense of another; suffice to say that each one lives up to their moment in the drama. Any or all of these are things you may find

in other *Matthews*; but you will rarely find the same careful relishing of text, which treats the German words almost as rhythmical and textural sounds in themselves rather than theological pronouncements, as in Hannah Morrison's lilting 'Ich-h will hier mein Herze strenken' or the choir's impatient 'L-lass ihn kreuzigen!'

What really makes this one special, however, is its emotional integrity, coming not from affected theatricality but from a pervading air of profound sadness. If 'sad' seems

As has often been the case since his Bach Pilgrimage of 2000, the John Eliot Gardiner of this new, second recording of the *St Matthew Passion* is a changed conductor from that of the first. That was a studio version for DG (10/89), made when Gardiner was their Bach man enjoying the benefits of studio time and big-name soloists including Anthony Rolfe Johnson, Barbara Bonney and Anne Sofie von Otter; it was a state-of-the-art product but today can sound a little brisk and uninvolved in that 1980s way, particularly with regard to the shaping of the words. The new recording for the Monteverdi Choir's own label is a live concert recording, with all the soloists except the Evangelist and Christus drawn from the ranks of the chorus. The live format is not so unusual in these economic times but choir soloists do seem to be dear to Gardiner for purely musical considerations, to judge from his use of them in several post-Pilgrimage projects. There is no doubt, however, that both elements pay off here.

The recording was made in Pisa Cathedral last September, but its foundations were laid over the previous six months



John Eliot Gardiner draws exquisite playing and singing from his musicians



'Memorable and moving': the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists perform Bach's St Matthew Passion with superbly controlled beauty

a weak word, it is not meant to be; it is just that the actors of this piece are not tearing at their hair but letting the weight of the events they are witnessing sink deep into their beings as individuals. The aching 'Erbarme dich' of alto Eleanor Minney and violinist Kati Debretzeni expresses it perfectly, assuming the pain further unto itself in a barely breathed *da capo*, like a wounded bird.

This is just one strongly moving moment among many, which more often than not are achieved through tender phrasing, confident (but never exaggerated) articulation and measured (but not sluggish) tempos. Though this at first may seem like a surprisingly light-touch reading from Gardiner, it is in fact one with a firmly controlled atmosphere of hurt and vulnerability. And when an individual

performance does break through to something more outwardly emotional, as in Minney's imploring 'Können Tränen meiner Wangen' or the heavy-laden strokes of Reiko Ichise's gamba in 'Komm süßes Kreuz', it thus emerges all the more truly.

In his booklet-note Gardiner repeats his assertion that Bach's great skill as an artist lay in his ability to write music with supreme power to console, and it is clear that this is what he has looked for here. That his considerable experience has enabled him to find it in such a thoughtfully moulded, expertly executed and deeply committed reading, so honestly communicative of its intent and so free of self-conscious monumentalism, sententiousness or melodramatics, is why I believe it to be one of his finest achievements. **Lindsay Kemp**

KEY TO SYMBOLS

Ⓕ	£10 and over	⤵	Download only
Ⓜ	£7.76 to £9.99	Ⓜ	Reissue
ⓑ	£6.25 to £7.75	Ⓜ	Historic
Ⓢ	£6.24 and below (price per disc)	T	Text(s) included
Ⓢ	Compact disc (number of discs in set)	t	translation(s) included
Ⓢ	SACD (Super Audio CD)	S	Synopsis included
Ⓢ	DVD Video	s	subtitles included
Ⓢ	Blu-ray	nla	no longer available
Ⓢ	LP	aas	all available separately
		oas	only available separately



Editor's Choice

Martin Cullingford's pick of the finest recordings reviewed in this issue

Orchestral



David Threasher enjoys the latest Haydn instalment from Boston:

'This is the sound of a conductor and an orchestra really clicking with their namesake composer' ► **REVIEW ON PAGE 53**



Hannah Nepil listens to a panoply of viola concertos:

'Andreas Baksa's music, by turns rhythmically muscular and hauntingly languid, reflects a variety of cultures' ► **REVIEW ON PAGE 63**

Adès

Asyla, Op 17^a. Brahms, Op 21^b.

Polaris (Voyage for Orchestra)^c. Tevot^c

Samuel Dale Johnson *bar*

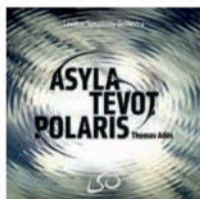
London Symphony Orchestra / Thomas Adès

LSO Live (F) (S) + (D) LSO0798 (63' • DDD/DSD •

DTS-HD MA5.1 & LPCM stereo 24 bit/192kHz • T/t)

Recorded live at the Barbican, London,

March ^bc9 & ^a16, 2016



Any route taken through the music of Thomas Adès sooner or later must confront

the irresistible force and power of the composer's orchestral 'trilogy' – *Asyla*, *Tevot* and *Polaris* – contained here on a single disc for the first time.

Separated by just over a decade, *Asyla* and *Polaris* (*Voyage for Orchestra*), inhabit very different sound worlds. Brash, brilliant, loud and dirty, *Asyla* vacillates between revelling in the postmodern rubble and rallying against it. In contrast, *Polaris* represents a journey's end – a strange, luminous outpost at the galaxy's edge. Somewhere in between, the ambitious, complex, monolithic *Tevot* draws on the visceral power of *Asyla* while looking ahead to the spectral sonorousness and sensuousness of *Polaris*.

Adès and the LSO's rendition of *Asyla* is generally more measured than Rattle's excellent recording with the CBSO (EMI, 7/99). The latter's exuberantly carnivalesque approach to the third movement, *Ecstasio* (Adès's vivid flirtation with electronic dance culture), is replaced by a psychologically more disturbing, claustrophobic and unsettling interpretation. Maybe the drugs don't work after all.

The LSO come into their own in *Tevot* and *Polaris*. Adès makes more of *Tevot*'s abrupt juxtapositions than Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic (EMI, 4/10), giving full rein to the work's almost wilful appropriation of extreme registers and dynamic contrasts. The orchestra is also given time to ease into the slow middle

section. As a result, the aerial view afforded by *Tevot*'s powerful ending – a panoramic sweep typical of Adès – is more convincing. The sense of an ending is more pronounced. *Polaris* provides the highlight, however, with the LSO's more fluent execution eclipsing Markus Stenz and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO Live, 8/14). Baritone Samuel Dale Johnson joins the orchestra for *Brahms*, Adès's witty setting of words by Alfred Brendel, where – to paraphrase the composer himself – one is perhaps too aware of Adès playing around with bits of Brahmsian material.

Containing brilliantly incisive booklet-notes (a rare thing these days) by Paul Griffiths, this is an excellent recording all round, with the LSO responding superbly well to the many technical and expressive challenges posed in performing Adès's orchestral music. **Pwyll ap Siôn**

JS Bach • Corelli • Telemann

JS Bach Keyboard Concerto, BWV1057^a Corelli Concerto grossi, Op 6^b – No 4; No 8, 'Christmas Concerto' Telemann Wassermusik, 'Hamburger Ebb' und Flut', TWV55:C3. Concerto, TWV54:B2

^aEmilie Roos *rec* ^aAnna Paradiso *hpd*

Höör Barock / Dan Laurin ^{ab}*rec*

BIS (F) (S) BIS2235 (69' • DDD/DSD)



This is, I think, a first release from Höör Barock, the orchestra founded in 2012 to

perform at the festival in the village that bears its name in the southernmost part of Sweden. As such it is essentially a showcase, both of their own talents and of their fruitful relationship with recorder virtuoso Dan Laurin, and very effective it is, considering their particular strengths. 'Individual voices are given ample space', claims their group biography, and for once you can hear precisely what they mean. How much better for their natural expressive exuberance and freedom to be let loose in a mixed, presumably concert-derived programme rather than some sober one-composer set!

From the almost too mannered stately opening of Telemann's *Hamburger Ebb' und Flut* to the two-speed Bourrée pairing in the same piece, and from the expansive opening of Corelli's *Christmas Concerto* to the gentle set-down at the end of the thrilling finale of the same composer's Op 6 No 4, there is an infectiousness to the interpretative energy of the music-making. The rhetorical daring and overspilling ornamentation are irresistible too, and must have made those Swedish summer evenings rock. With soloist Anna Paradiso they make the finale of Bach's F major Harpsichord Concerto, arranged from the Fourth *Brandenburg* and already one of its composer's most coursingly exciting, more scintillating than ever.

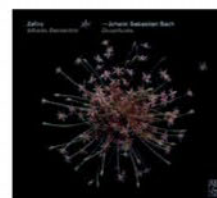
Perhaps there is a price to be paid for all this. Ensemble is not always precise, and the use of solo recorders instead of violins in the Corelli concertos, together with the overall individuality of the performances, may mean that these do not make ideal 'reference' performances of these pieces, if that is what you want. The recorded balance seems rather close on some of its soloists too. But hey, the best thing to do with these fresh-faced Swedes is surely simply to enjoy their playing and say thank you for the music! **Lindsay Kemp**

JS Bach

Orchestral Suites – No 1, BWV1066; No 3, BWV1068; No 4, BWV1069. Cantata No 119 – Overture; Cantata No 194 – Overture

Zefiro / Alfredo Bernardini *ob*

Arcana (F) A400 (77' • DDD)



Scholars speculate that some or all of Bach's extant orchestral suites

originated many years before their earliest surviving Leipzig sources. Peerless historical wind specialists Zefiro put such questions aside and let musical sophistication do the talking. There's no room for the B minor Suite with flute (BWV1067) but the three



'Conversational transparency and dancelike ebb and flow': historical wind specialists Zefiro excel in Bach's Orchestral Suites

largest-scale suites (called *ouvertures* in the original sources) are presented. In BWV1066 trio passages are played by oboists Alfredo Bernardini and Paulo Grazzi and bassoonist Alberto Grazzi with unerring momentum and nuanced deftness (eg the second Bourrée) – matched stroke for stroke by the contoured strings and judicious harpsichord continuo. French-style dances lilt, sway or scamper, with a keen attention to charismatic details (the pair of Passepiés is an ideal compound of liveliness and refinement). Moreover, the largest-scale music with trumpets, timpani and woodwinds is never merely bellicose but always shaded intelligently: fulsome moments such as the Gigue that concludes BWV1068 and the thrilling Overture that launches BWV1069 lack nothing in richness but also have conversational transparency and dancelike ebb and flow. More intimate moments are also judged perfectly, nowhere more so than from the unison first violins' *cantabile* sensitivity in a beguiling performance of the famous Air in BWV1068.

Bernardini 'reconstructs' two *ouverture*-style movements based on the hypothesis that several elaborate opening choruses of Leipzig sacred cantatas could have been arranged from unknown lost orchestral pieces, and he takes inspiration from

Bach's own adaptation of the *ouverture* from BWV1069 for the beginning of Cantata No 110, *Unser Mund sei voll Lachens*. Accordingly, the start of No 194, *Höchstewünschtes Freudenfest*, is rearranged into an orchestral piece for four-part reeds in dialogue with strings, and the first chorus of No 119, *Preise, Jerusalem, den Herrn*, is converted into a splendid *ouverture* featuring four trumpets, timpani, two recorders, three oboes, bassoon and strings; Zefiro's radiant performances produce a convincing outcome to the experiment. It's a nice touch that this album is dedicated affectionately to the memory of pioneering Baroque oboist and musicologist Bruce Haynes. **David Vickers**

Beethoven

Symphony No 2, Op 36. Overtures: Coriolan, Op 62; Egmont, Op 84; Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus, Op 43; Die Ruinen von Athen, Op 113; Zur Namensfeier, Op 115

Beethoven Orchestra, Bonn / Stefan Blunier
Dabringhaus und Grimm (D) MDG937 1977-6 (66' • DDD/DSD)

Beethoven

Symphonies - No 4, Op 60; No 7, Op 92

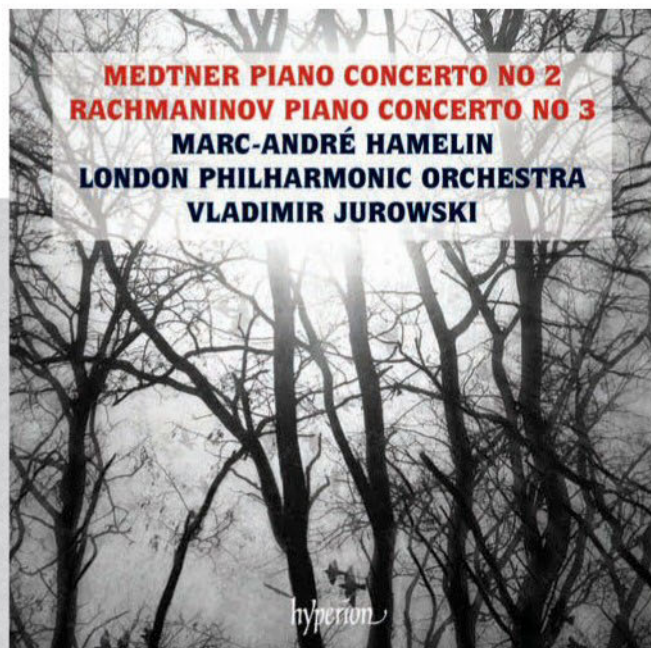
Beethoven Orchestra, Bonn / Stefan Blunier
Dabringhaus und Grimm (D) MDG937 1995-6 (74' • DDD/DSD)



I've always thought of Beethoven's Second as the first stage on his revolutionary symphonic journey, as much a leap forwards from the First as the Third is from this D major masterpiece. Stefan Blunier cues some potent *sforzandos*, though the massive gesture at 1'48" that signals a harmonic sea change could perhaps have been more forcefully stated. The ensuing *Allegro con brio* has plenty of impetus, and I like the prominent bass-line and horns from 7'19" into the development. The *Larghetto* is pliable; and in the scherzo, with its Haydnesque chatter between instrumental desks, there are vivid contrasts between the movement's singing legato and the swift, shimmering string-writing.

A very good performance then, though there are at least two digital rivals I prefer: on the period-instrument front I'd opt for Emmanuel Krivine on Naïve; but, for a fiery, lean, energetic and comprehensively expressive modern instrument version, I'd go for the late Stanisław Skrowaczewski

hyperion



A typical release—in so far as there can ever be such a thing—from Marc-André Hamelin, combining a stimulating, unexpected coupling, brilliant new light shed on the familiar, and pianism of the very highest calibre. Not to be missed.

CDA68145
Available Friday 31 March 2017

Medtner & Rachmaninov: Piano Concertos

MARC-ANDRÉ HAMELIN piano
LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
VLADIMIR JUROWSKI conductor

A third volume of Mozart sonatas from this acclaimed duo, in a series which is rapidly becoming established as the benchmark for this repertoire.

CDA68143 (2 CDs for the price of 1)
Available Friday 31 March 2017

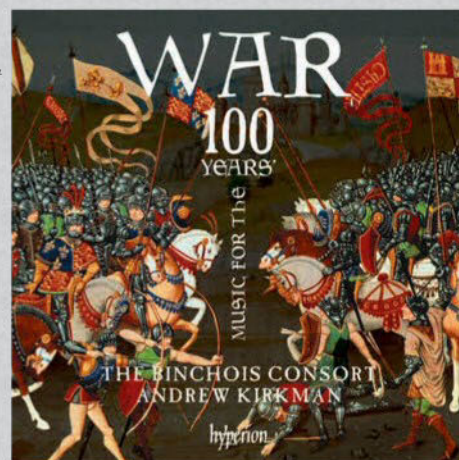
Mozart: Violin Sonatas
ALINA IBRAGIMOVA violin
CÉDRIC TIBERGHIE piano



Music spanning the century of Agincourt and the House of Lancaster brought vividly to life by Andrew Kirkman and The Binchois Consort.

CDA68170
Available Friday 31 March 2017

Music for the 100 Years' War
THE BINCHOIS CONSORT
ANDREW KIRKMAN conductor



COMING SOON ...

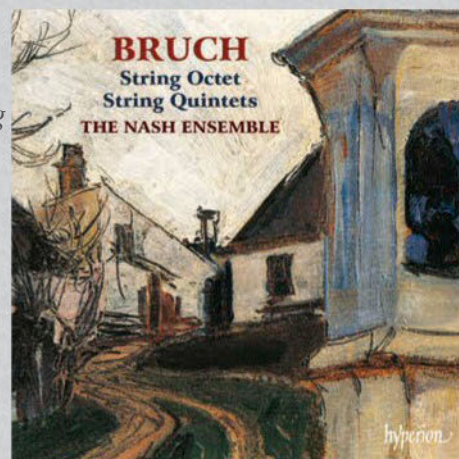
Schumann: Davidsbündlertänze, Humoreske & Blumenstück Luca Buratto (piano)
Couperin: L'Apothéose de Lully & Leçons de ténébres Arcangelo, Jonathan Cohen (conductor)
Czerny: Piano Concertos Howard Shelley (piano), Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra
Guyot: Te Deum laudamus & other sacred music Cinquecento
Organ Fireworks World Tour Christopher Herrick (organ)
Ravel: Piano Concertos; Falla: Nights in the gardens of Spain Steven Osborne, BBC Scottish SO, Ludovic Morlot
Nenov: Piano Concerto & Ballade No 2 Ivo Varbanov (piano), Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Emil Tabakov



Three late, lesser-known chamber works, all inhabiting a sound world of Brahmsian richness and depth in warmly sympathetic performances.

CDA68168
Available Friday 31 March 2017

Bruch: String Quintets & String Octet
THE NASH ENSEMBLE



OTHER LABELS AVAILABLE FOR
DOWNLOAD ON OUR WEBSITE

LSO
signum
CLASSICS

MARIINSKY
THE CHOIR OF
KING'S COLLEGE
Gimell

Collegium
Linn
Just Listen

CDs, MP3 and lossless downloads of all our recordings are
available from ***www.hyperion-records.co.uk***

HYPERION RECORDS LTD, PO BOX 25, LONDON SE9 1AX · info@hyperion-records.co.uk · TEL +44 (0)20 8318 1234

and the Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra, part of his complete cycle on the Oehms label, the full-bodied and admirably clear recording dating from 2005. Among 'historical' options there's Toscanini's 1939 broadcast recording (Music & Arts or Immortal Performances), which makes you fully aware of just what a powerful and remarkable piece Beethoven's Second is, something that no one else does with quite as much conviction.

The Fourth receives a humdinger of a performance under Blunier, swift, propulsive, very well shaped and texturally transparent. The transition from the sombre *Adagio* to the sun-drenched *Allegro vivace* is as thrilling as any I've heard in recent years and the finale, which flies off at a real lick, is a virtuoso tour de force, especially from the strings and bassoon. The Seventh is nearly as good, especially the *Allegretto*, which Blunier builds with a genuine sense of nobility. The Scherzo has plenty of bounce but I was disappointed that Blunier opted not to play the finale's repeat, especially as he repeats the lengthy exposition in the first movement – although things aren't quite as bad as the box back suggests: the stated movement timing of 4'42" for the finale should actually read 6'42". Still, in this particular symphony I'd opt for the hugely dynamic David Zinman and the Zurich Tonhalle as a first digital port of call. There you also have the repeat.

Blunier's programming context for the Second Symphony is a group of five Beethoven overtures, *The Ruins of Athens* and *Zur Namensfeier* being especially good, the latter totally off the wall but a great listen. *Prometheus* is both lively and unpressured, which means that unlike some other recorded performances detail is relished rather than glossed over. Neither *Coriolan* nor *Egmont* quite compares with readings by such feted Beethovenians as Karajan, Furtwängler, Toscanini or Klemperer. There you feel that you're wreathed in storm clouds atop some mythical mountain, whereas with Blunier it's more a case of listening to fine, well-crafted music with nothing much else on the agenda. A fair enough way to spend your time, of course – provided you're happy to scale the heights without quite reaching the summit. **Rob Cowan**

Symphonies – selected comparisons:

Zurich Tonhalle Orch, Zinman

(7/99) (ARTN) 74321 65410-2

Chbr Philb, Krivine (7/11) (NAIV) V5258

Saarbrücken RSO, Skrowaczewski (OEHM) OC526

Berlioz

Symphonie fantastique, Op 14

La Chambre Philharmonique / Emmanuel Krivine

Video director Olivier Simonnet

Alpha  ALPHA714

(125' • NTSC • 16:9 • PCM stereo • O • S)

Recorded live at the Cité de la Musique, Paris,

May 27, 2014. Bonuses include Concert

Commentary, 'The Bassoon', 'The Timpani',

'The Violin' and Round Table



Emmanuel Krivine's account of the *Symphonie fantastique*, sensitively filmed at the Cité de la Musique in 2014 during La Chambre Philharmonique's 10th anniversary, somehow manages to be physical yet restrained, transparent but unilluminated, not quite routine, not quite racy.

Much is made of the 'orchestre sur instruments d'époque', as if, 30 years after the first period recordings by Norrington and Gardiner, this were novel. It isn't, even if it is still surprisingly rare.

That means, as extras, you get video presentations of period violins, bassoons, and timpani but not, alas, the wonderful serpent and ophicleides that show up in the performance. In the concert proper, the 64 players are committed, rhythmically alert and attuned to each other. The playing is clean, with a characterful wind section forward in the balance.

But as has become ever more generally clear over the years, radical instrumentation does not for radical interpretation make. Jos van Immerseel and Anima Eterna Brugge (Zig-Zag Territoires, 5/10) are more provocative on period instruments, while Daniel Harding and the Swedish Radio Symphony, the victors in my recent Berlioz survey (Harmonia Mundi, 10/16), are still unmatched for shock power.

First time round, I made the error of watching the performance with Krivine's commentary turned on. Presumably unscripted, what could have been an insightful exercise turns out to be more suspect. His comments on the musicians – an oboist is a 'tortured soul' and a flautist is 'not an easy fellow' – might be heard by some viewers as honest, by others as belittling.

And then there's a soliloquy on female instrumentalists, which obscures a good chunk of 'Un bal'. 'Women musicians are very conscientious', Krivine comments, after he recounts his progressive bona fides. 'I have nothing against men, but you need a balance.' Baffling. **David Allen**


Brahms

'Elbphilharmonie Hamburg: The First Recording'

Symphonies – No 3, Op 90; No 4, Op 98

NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, Hamburg /

Thomas Hengelbrock

Sony Classical  88985 40508-2 (76' • DDD)



These recordings are the first to be made in the new 2100-seat concert hall that

sits at the heart of the €780 million commercial, residential and arts complex in Hamburg harbour. In a multimedia age, a great hall cannot be designed for concert-giving alone, which is why it's not without significance that these recordings were made two months before the Elbphilharmonie's official opening in January 2017.

The hall is a younger sibling of Hans Scharoun's game-changing 1963 Berlin Philharmonie. Its 'vineyard' layout derives from the Philharmonie, as did Tokyo's Suntory Hall, another Scharoun- and Karajan-influenced design, whose acoustic engineer Yasuhisa Toyota is also responsible for the Elbphilharmonie. The difference is that where it took several years for the Berlin Philharmonie to become a plausible recording venue, the new hall seems pretty well spot-on from the outset. Try the last movement of the Third Symphony or the Scherzo of the Fourth to sample its qualities.

Hamburg is Brahms's birthplace and under conductors such as Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt and Günter Wand the NDR Symphony Orchestra has long had a claim to be the authentic voice of North German Brahms. The Brahms readings of the orchestra's current chief conductor, 58-year-old Thomas Hengelbrock, are more South German in temper but as a generalist well-versed in the craft of conducting he knows his way around the music. The Third Symphony is well suited to his mellower style and is effectively done, a slightly underpowered first movement exposition notwithstanding. I suspect Brahms intended the third-movement *Poco allegretto* to have more of the feel of an intermezzo about it. What we have here is a second nocturne that further darkens an already darkening landscape. Still, the playing is exquisite; after which the finale is superbly judged.

The disc begins with the Fourth Symphony rather than the Third and with a four-bar plagal cadence which you will find in Brahms's autograph manuscript but which never reached the printed page – at

least not until the movement's end, where that same cadence brings the music to its appointed close. Sony's booklet claims this as 'a world first', which isn't strictly true. Riccardo Chailly allows us a chance to hear the cancelled opening in his fine Leipzig cycle (Decca, 10/13) where it's shrewdly tucked away in a brief appendix.

Apart from that otiose opening and some dynamically misaligned edits (mainly in the same symphony) these are musically agreeable recordings. Where Brahms is concerned, Hamburg has not lost its touch.

Richard Osborne

Brahms

'Rereading Brahms'

The Complete Symphonies

Svizzera Italiana Orchestra / Markus Poschner

Sony Classical ② DVD 88985 38886-9

(3h 12' • PAL • 16:9 • DTS5.1 & PCM stereo • 0)

Recorded live at LAC Lugano Arte e Cultura,

October 2015 & February 2016



Twenty years ago, much was made of an attempt by Sir Charles Mackerras to recover a performing tradition familiar to

Brahms, by styling the Scottish Chamber Orchestra as a new Meiningen Court ensemble and paying heed to some interpretative hints left for the symphonies by Fritz Steinbach, who succeeded Hans von Bülow at Meiningen and was praised by the composer for his fidelity to the spirit as well as the letter of his scores. Now comes the Swiss-Italian Orchestra of Lugano, sounding considerably better drilled under its chief conductor Markus Poschner than in Hermann Scherchen's unforgettably rough and ready traversal of Beethoven symphonies (on Accord) or, for that matter, on the occasion of the ensemble's London concert in December 2015 under its principal guest conductor, Vladimir Ashkenazy.

The bass weight missing from a string section of 8.8.6.5.3 throws the spotlight on the orchestra's winds, in which the first clarinet in particular shines with much playing of soloistic refinement on an unusual-looking, possibly older instrument. Lack of numbers tells less in the to and fro of first-movement arguments or even the swinging themes of finales than the *espressivo* unfolding of slow movements: Brahms referred to the Meiningen orchestra as 'von Bülow's brilliant string quintet' with characteristically forked pen.

There is much 'pushing forwards and holding back' of the basic pulse, as Brahms

recommended in a much-studied letter to Joseph Joachim. On Telarc (10/97), Mackerras often pressed on whereas Poschner tends towards indulgence. The reprise of the Third Symphony's ineffable *Allegretto* almost fails to arrive: one dead spot in what is otherwise the most exciting and wholly successful of the four symphonies, with a justifiably protracted and sonorously balanced final chord.

Poschner brings more light and less shade than is now fashionable to the Second Symphony (the *Allegretto* has a winning lilt, and third movements in general come off well) and a Schumannesque, impulsive vigour to the opening movement of the First. However, I miss a sense of jeopardy in the Fourth and the First's finale, which begins with all the tension of a standoff in a model village and ends with a fussily managed showdown. Within similarly self-imposed limits of scale, with more integrated tempos and playing of considerably greater dynamic refinement from the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Paavo Berglund (Ondine, 8/01) achieves so much more.

I am unconvinced that the filming adds much. Every important entry is ticked off and there are half-hearted attempts to vary first-movement exposition repeats (all of them taken) by showing different angles of the same players. A more serious deficiency lies in the constricted sound, which is abruptly damped at *tutti*, making a nonsense of any dynamic gradation above *mezzo-forte*, and throws a wet towel over the whole, otherwise admirable enterprise. Clicking to play through an entire symphony cues up a short sequence of lakeside Lugano maddeningly soundtracked by a big tune extracted from the symphony that begins seconds later. Poschner's single-minded and often compellingly rhetorical way with Brahms is better experienced in a 2011 audio-only recording of the Third and Fourth with the Bremen Philharmonic, on the Dreyer Gaido label. Peter Quantrill

Bruckner

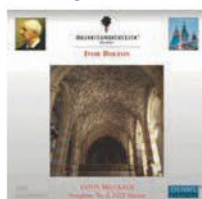
Symphony No 2 (1872 version, ed Carragan)

Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra / Ivor Bolton

Oehms ② OC447 (72' • DDD)

Recorded live at the Grosses Festspielhaus,

Salzburg, October 2-4, 2015



Despite Ivor Bolton's Bruckner recordings having been praised in these pages by Peter Quantrill, Richard Osborne and Edward Greenfield, the series has tended to fly

somewhat under the radar in terms of public profile, possibly a result of Oehms already having three other Bruckner cycles to promote. For this impressive final instalment of the series, Bolton has opted for the early 1872 version of the Second Symphony, a choice which contrasts with his preference for the later versions of the symphonies elsewhere in the cycle. As with the other symphonies that exist in more than one version, Bruckner's revisions involve both gains and losses. The 1872 score is by far the longest version as well as being notable for the horn solo at the end of the *Adagio*, which Bruckner subsequently rescored for clarinet due to the perceived difficulty of the original for the players of the time.

The booklet-note lists 69 players in the orchestra, with strings deployed in the ratio 14.12.10.8.7. This might seem modest for a Bruckner symphony but there is impressive heft and weight in the orchestral sound, particularly from the brass. Although the string tone couldn't be described as fulsome, the playing is expressive and there's no lack of volume when required. The overall impression is one of vividness and transparency, aided by the exemplary recording. The performance of the Scherzo is particularly successful, although Bolton's direction of the outer movements is also very convincing. By contrast, the reading of the *Adagio* comes across as slightly cool, missing the luminosity that makes Gerd Schaller's recording of the score so persuasive. However, Schaller's version comes harnessed in a set with the First and Third Symphonies. Among single-disc offerings of the 1872 edition, Bolton's recording is hard to beat. Christian Hoskins

Selected comparison:

Philh Festiva, Schaller (PROF) PH12022

Bruckner

Symphony No 6 (ed Haas)

Staatskapelle Dresden / Christian Thielemann

Video director Henning Kasten

C Major Entertainment ② DVD 738208;

② 738304 (63' • NTSC • 16:9 • 1080i •

DTS-HD MA5.0, DTS5.0 & PCM stereo • 0)

Recorded live at the Semperoper, Dresden,

September 13 & 14, 2015



Towards the end of the Scherzo, the camera catches a viola player giving a smile to a colleague. It's a rare glimpse of visible delight in a performance otherwise marked by seriousness of purpose and intensity of concentration. This isn't

to suggest that a performance of Bruckner's music shouldn't be regarded as a serious undertaking, but there's a solemnity of approach here that seems to me slightly at odds with the Sixth Symphony's inherent warmth and vitality.

As with previous releases in the cycle, the playing of the Staatskapelle Dresden is everything one could wish for, both on a soloistic level and as an ensemble unified in a common goal. Melodic lines and inner voices are beautifully articulated, and the blending of the brass is an art form in itself. Thielemann, conducting from memory, leads a well-paced and unmannered reading of the score, attentive as always to Bruckner's dynamic contrasts. I just wish that the performance offered a degree more engagement with the spirit of the music and not just the letter.

Video director Henning Kasten, who also oversaw Thielemann's account of the Eighth Symphony, maintains visual interest with a well-chosen mixture of close, medium and distance shots while avoiding the constant use of movement by Agnes Méth in other instalments of the cycle. The camerawork includes a number of interior views of the Semperoper as the orchestra plays, which helps create the impression of being at the performance. The audio quality is impressively wide ranging and open, with plenty of air around the instruments even in the loudest climaxes. **Christian Hoskins**

Devienne

'Flute Concertos, Vol 2'

Flute Concertos - No 5; No 6; No 7; No 8

Swedish Chamber Orchestra / Patrick Gallois fl

Naxos (M) 8 573464 (67' • DDD)



Pity François Devienne, who died in the Charenton asylum of derangement

brought about (according to a sympathetic pupil) 'by the various sorrows which he had experienced during the Revolution'. It's startling to think that he wrote the graceful and sunny Flute Concerto No 6 in Paris during the Terror of 1793-94. Devienne's musical voice is unambiguously *ancien régime*. Only occasionally do these four concertos hint at a Romantic future: in the Rossini-like *crescendos* of the E minor Concerto No 7, say, or when (as in the finale of Concerto No 5) a bit of whirligig solo passagework spins towards *fantaisie brillante* territory.

Patrick Gallois is at his most impressive in these passages: he does tongue-twisting display with formidable clarity. Elsewhere, on this second disc in Naxos's Devienne cycle, he's less persuasive. As both soloist and director, he benefits from the clear, vibrato-light playing of the (modern-instrument) Swedish Chamber Orchestra. But he leans towards brisk tempos; and in the busier solo passages, these performances can feel hurried, as if Gallois and his orchestra are starting to push each other beyond what's comfortable or expressive. Phrasing becomes choppy and orchestral chords land heavily.

Gallois also has a tendency, on sustained notes, to let his sound coarsen and swell; and the orchestral *tuttis*, too, could accommodate more characterisation, more poise, perhaps just more love. There's a slight feeling here of a group of musicians simply getting through the notes – and although Devienne writes a lot of notes, it's not for want of anything to say. András Adorján on Tudor has the benefit of a conductor, and for my money makes a more engaging case for this far from negligible music.

Richard Bratby

Concertos – selected comparison:

Adorján, Munich CO, Stadlmayr (TUDO) TUDOR1620

Glass

Violin Concerto^a. Violin Sonata^b.

The Hours^b – Escape!; Morning Passages

Amy Dickson sax^b Catherine Milledge pf

^aRoyal Philharmonic Orchestra / Mikel Toms

Sony Classical (P) 88985 41194-2 (57' • DDD)

^aFrom RCA 88697 37679-2 (3/10)



Given the saxophone's importance in early minimalist scores and its central role

in defining the unique sound of Glass's ensemble during the 1970s, the composer has written surprisingly little for the instrument since then, even less so in a solo capacity. All of which has meant that the soprano saxophone virtuoso Amy Dickson had to think beyond the box in tackling Glass's music. She first arranged his Violin Concerto 10 years ago, and her impressive 2008 recording with the RPO under Mikel Toms makes another appearance on this disc.

Strangely enough, around the same time that Dickson was learning how to circular breathe to play Glass's concerto, the composer was completing his three-movement Violin Sonata. At first glance, it's a strange inclusion. Even by Glass's standards, an inauspicious opening – a clichéd chord pattern circling agitatedly around G minor, E flat major, F major and D major – promises little. However, Glass extends and combines patterns derived from this rather unremarkable sequence, increasingly building momentum throughout the first movement by adding and layering scale-like flourishes.

The performance is aided by cool, precise playing from Dickson. Crisp articulation is also evident throughout the dancelike final movement of the sonata, too, reinforced by bouncy, funky disco-style octave bass-lines on the piano, played

primephonic
**Amplify your life
with harmonia mundi**

SAVE 20% ON HI-RES DOWNLOADS

primephonic.com



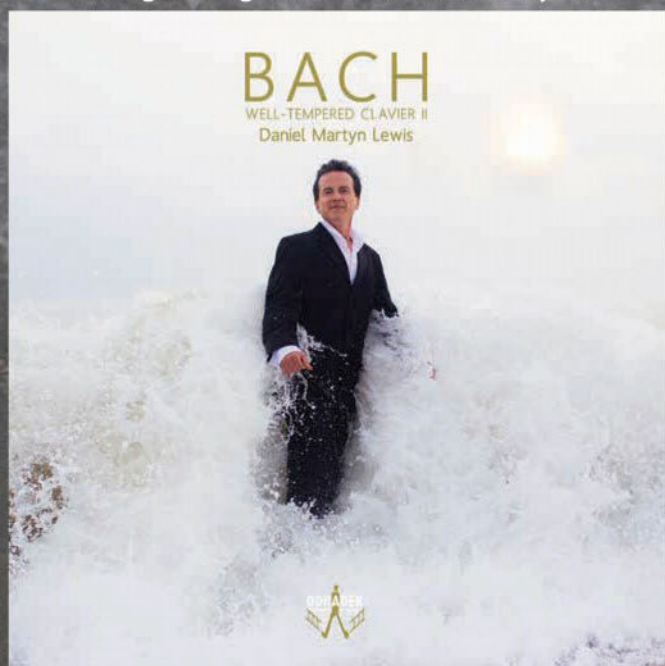
A non-profit, democratic cooperative, putting music and musicians first.

Classical. Jazz.

ODRADEK

A label by artists, for artists.

Daniel Martyn Lewis performs
Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II, on the piano,
shedding new light on this extraordinary music.



Daniel Martyn Lewis immersed himself in music of many eras before feeling compelled to return to his first love, Bach. This CD represents the fruits of his dedication to Bach's output. The Well-Tempered Clavier is an intricate masterpiece, yet it is not prescriptive in its nuances, enabling each interpretation to bring something different to the listener. Daniel Martyn Lewis has chosen to perform these exquisitely crafted works on the piano rather than on the harpsichord, thus presenting these pieces in fresh guises. For Daniel Martyn Lewis, Bach's music is the epitome of beauty and joy, and he communicates that sense of joy in radiant performances throughout this disc.

Award-winning pianist Juan Carlos takes us on a
journey from Robert Schumann's passionate early
piano pieces to his haunting final piano work.



Juan Carlos is a passionate advocate of Schumann's music, and has meticulously constructed this programme to reflect each era of the composer's life. Carnaval is a masked ball of colourful characters, brought to life by Schumann's rich imagination. The Faschingschwank aus Wien ('Carnival Jest from Vienna') was inspired by Schumann's enjoyment of a Viennese festival, whereas he claimed that the theme to his last piano work, the Geistervariationen – 'Ghost Variations' – was given to him by angels. The music is indeed angelic; almost painfully serene and other-worldly. Juan Carlos leads us through these contrasting phases with great sensitivity. An essential disc for all lovers of Schumann's piano music.

ANONY
MUZE
.COM



Artists are selected through our democratic,
blind judging platform ANONYMUZE.COM
Apply here: bit.ly/odradek



www.odradek-records.com

Marketed and distributed in the UK and Ireland
by Proper Music Distribution

with real zip and verve by Catherine Milledge. The pianist's contribution to the two arrangements included from the soundtrack to *The Hours* ('Morning Passages' and 'Escape!') – the latter recycling the composer's *Metamorphosis 2*) is also telling, with the saxophone often supporting the piano. One only feels the absence of the violin during the sonata's second movement, where the saxophone fails to match the expressive weight and intensity captured on violinist Maria Bachmann's riveting performance on 'Glass Heart' (Orange Mountain Music, 4/11^{US}). However, Dickson's highly nuanced and skilful interpretations on this disc amply demonstrate that her musical versatility extends beyond mere 'arrangement' of Glass's music. **Pwyll ap Siôn**

Halvorsen • Nielsen • Svendsen

Halvorsen Violin Concerto, Op 28 **Nielsen** Violin Concerto, Op 33 **Svendsen** Romance

Henning Kraggerud *vn*

Malmö Symphony Orchestra / Bjarne Engeset

Naxos (M) 8 573738 (62' • DDD)



So is Johan Halvorsen's 1909 Violin Concerto – presumed destroyed until it was found in 2015 – a rediscovered masterpiece? Perhaps not. But it's a whole lot more than characterless late-Romantic note-spinning, with some fascinating and arresting structural features (it opens with the same 'orchestral salvo/soloist cadenza' gesture as Bruch's First Concerto before it and Nielsen's after it) and at times a highly individual gait. The way the accompaniment stalks the leading device in the second movement could even foreshadow Prokofiev, while the finale's swing tells you it's in three when it's actually in four. Henning Kraggerud's woody but relatively contained sound fits the piece beautifully until, as in that finale, you want the soloist to take proceedings by the scruff of the neck. Kraggerud never really does and the concerto's final pages can feel a little unsure of themselves as a result.

And, as we've heard before, Nielsen's Concerto needs something rather more than Kraggerud's unfailing and rather contained eloquence: either Vilde Frang's elfin revisionism (EMI, 9/12) or Cecilia Zilliacus's uncompromising fortitude. Where Zilliacus ramps up the tension by digging into repeated notes and confronting the orchestra head-on, Kraggerud sometimes appears deliberately

unemphatic and can struggle with tuning where Zilliacus, for all her abandon, doesn't. There is too little direct engagement and reaction between soloist and orchestra, and it's also telling that Kraggerud's go-to sound – vibrato speed, weight of bow on string – is remarkably similar in Svendsen's Romance. That piece is gorgeously and sensitively played, but next to it Nielsen's Concerto should be a whole different aesthetic ball game.

Andrew Mellor

Nielsen – selected comparison:

Zilliacus, Helsingborg SO, Blendulf

(2/16) (DBPR) DBCD162

Haydn

Violin Concerto No 3, HobVIIa/3^a.

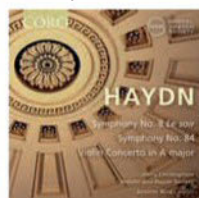
Symphonies – No 8, 'Le soir'; No 84^a

^a**Aisslinn Nosky** *vn*

Handel and Haydn Society / Harry Christophers

Coro (F) COR16148 (77' • DDD)

Recorded live at Symphony Hall, Boston, January 29 & 31, 2016



Harry Christophers and his Boston ensemble complete their cycle of the three

'Times of Day' symphonies, the three violin concertos and the first three 'Paris' symphonies, and this third disc is the best of the consistently stylish series. Aisslinn Nosky once again applies her focused tone to the A major Concerto and she is joined by the front desks of the Handel and Haydn Society in a wonderfully chamber-like *Le soir*, with solo playing that oozes the fun they must have been having, from the flute of Christopher Krueger right down to the cheeky virtuoso double bass of Robert Nairn.

This is the sound of a conductor and an orchestra really clicking with their namesake composer. In Symphony No 84, too, their love of the music is palpable, from the sustained string introduction (a forerunner of the Parsifalian opening of Symphony No 102) to the playfulness of the finale's long-legged themes. Listen especially to the horns in the opening movement's *tuttis* near the beginning of the *Allegro* – delicious.

Speeds are bright, with the Minuet of No 84 faster than *allegretto*, as is the current fashion. The only black mark is that second-half repeats in the outer movements are omitted in the later symphony, while they are observed in *Le soir*. Occasional minor blips remind us that these performances are recorded in concert (there is minimal audience rustle

and no applause) but this only adds to the feeling of living, breathing music.

Where now for the series? There are three more 'Paris' symphonies, which Christophers – who has just renewed his contract in Boston until 2021 – has been conducting with the Society. Of course, there are plenty of early symphonies with which to pair them; but what of the concertos? It would be good to hear any of the Handel and Haydn players as soloists, but it is Nairn's bass-playing, especially, that makes you rue the disappearance of Haydn's 1763 concerto for the instrument. **David Thresher**

Ives

'Orchestral Works, Vol 3'

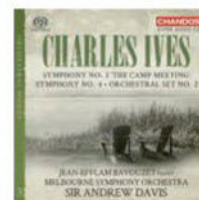
Symphonies – No 3, 'The Camp Meeting'; No 4^a.

Orchestral Set No 2^b

^b**Jean-Efflam Bavouzet** *pf* **Melbourne Symphony**

^{ab}**Chorus and Orchestra / Sir Andrew Davis**

Chandos (F) CHSA5174 (71' • DDD/DSD)



The first instalment of Andrew Davis's Ives series (5/15), which included the First

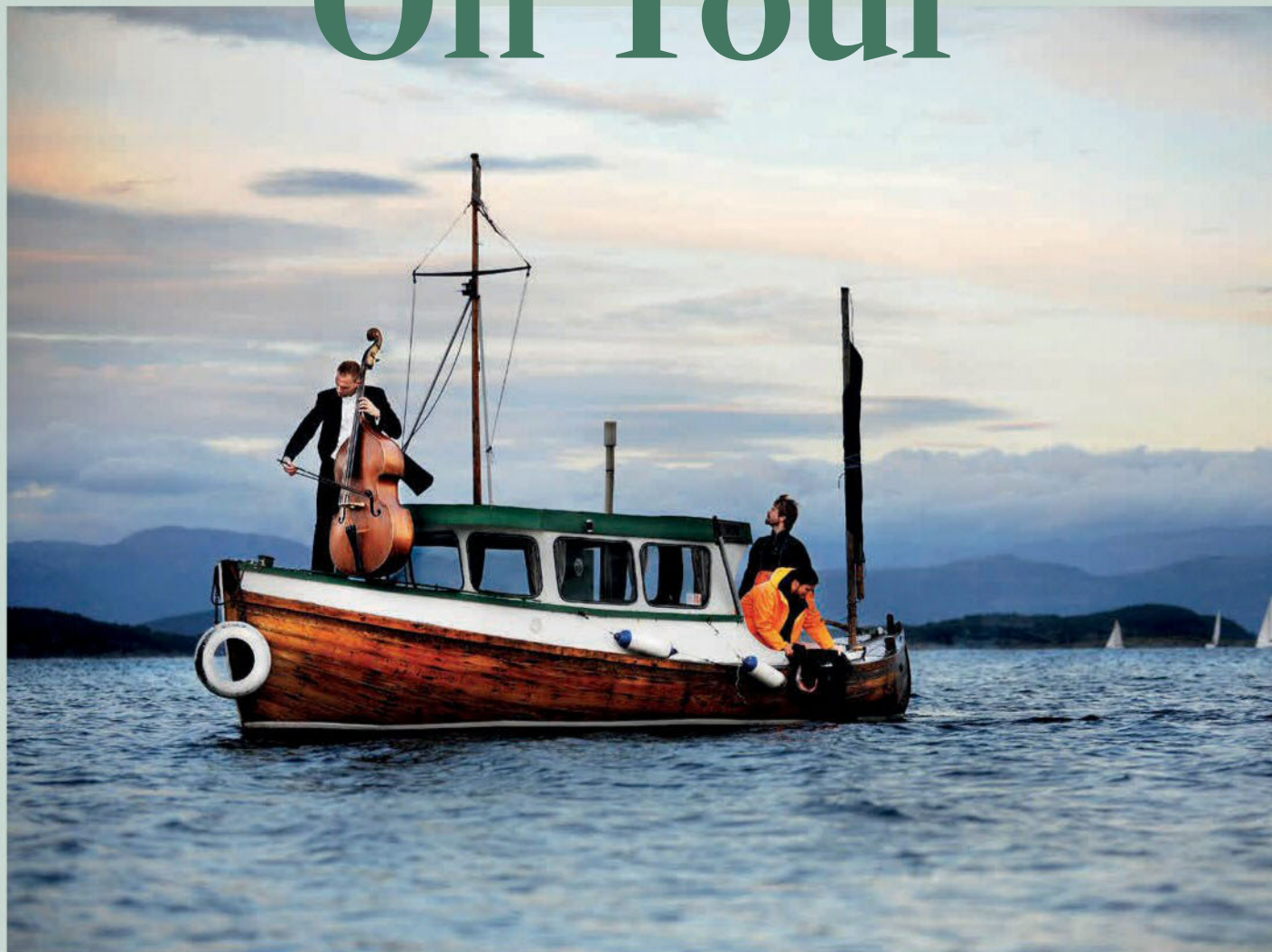
and Second Symphonies, was generally well received but with a caveat: there is enjoyable music in both works, and some signs in the Second Symphony of what was to come, but neither really tests an orchestra and its leader like the bristling Third Symphony and the sonically sprawling Fourth. There has also been a bit of an Ives boom recently, with fine recordings from Seattle with Ludovic Morlot and, going back a bit further, from Dallas with Andrew Litton.

After a volume of shorter orchestra works (2/16), we have now have the third instalment, and ample proof that Davis is undaunted by the glorious confusion Ives sought to capture in these later works. There is an occasional coolness to his conducting, but this music wants a bit of cooling off now and then. In Morlot's reading of the Fourth Symphony, the piano growls and barks and thunders throughout the thick, Impressionistic textures, while Davis integrates it more elegantly into the fabric. *Fortissimos* from the Melbourne players are big but not quite as explosive as from other ensembles. And that turns out to be a winning strategy. The Fourth Symphony can be as maddening, dramatically, as the New England landscape is frustrating topographically: one doesn't always see the larger picture, and only upon ascending a peak do you realise that there is another, taller one right behind it.

Stavanger Symphony Orchestra

On Tour

ENJOY THE NORWEGIAN SOUND



Russia Moscow

April 26th 7pm – Tchaikovsky Hall

Russia Saint Petersburg

April 27th 7pm – Mariinsky Theatre

Finland Lathi

April 28th 7pm – Sibeliustalo

Netherland Amsterdam

April 30th 11am – Het Concertgebouw

Amsterdam-programme without Mendelssohn

Programme

Mendelssohn: Hebrides Overture

Bruch: Concerto for Violin No. 1

Dvorak: Symphony No. 8

Conductor: **Christian Vasquez**

Soloist: **Sergey Khachatryan**, violin

sso.no



STAVANGER
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Violinist Aislinn Nosky plays Haydn's A major Violin Concerto with Boston's Handel and Haydn Society – see review on page 53

Davis clarifies that, especially in the second movement of the last symphony, a grand 'comedy' in a dark, ironic vein, which is given an order and drama that it rarely has when the focus is only on building up its layers of densely quilted chaos. The music manages to be existentially engulfing yet relatively chaste and manageable at the same time.

The string sound from Melbourne is appropriately rich, and from time to time it is applied with a nice, almost Brahmsian sheen – Ives, for all his experiments, never turned away from his 19th-century orchestral roots. The chorus also produce lovely sounds in the Fourth Symphony and Orchestral Set No 2, which opens the disc, and Jean-Efflam Bavouzet deftly negotiates the challenging piano part in the Fourth Symphony. American listeners may blanch at the thought of an English conductor producing such estimable Ives with an Australian orchestra – but better to be flattered at the lasting international triumph of this music on a grand scale, something Ives might have coveted but could not possibly have imagined.

Philip Kennicott

Symphonies Nos 3 & 4 – selected comparisons:

Dallas SO, Litton (11/06) (HYPE) CDA67525, 68540 (oas)

Seattle SO, Morlot (4/16) (SEAT) SSM1009

Ligeti

Cello Concerto^a. Piano Concerto^b.

Chamber Concerto. Melodien

^aChristian Poltéra ^{vc} Joonas Ahonen ^{pf}

BIT20 Ensemble / Baldur Brönnimann

BIS (E) BIS2209 (72' • DDD/DSD)



György Ligeti's 1966 Cello Concerto is meant to grow from the brink of silence,

with a sustained note that gradually crescendos the cello soloist into the arms of the ensemble. Ligeti even went to the trouble of marking his opening E natural with a *pppppppp* dynamic indication, which leaves a whole bunch of questions hanging about the philosophy of silence: *piano* to the power eight might be possible electronically, but the very act of placing a bow against a string means that a point of initial attack is inevitable. Soloists elsewhere – Siegfried Palm, Miklós Perényi and Pierre Strauch included – dance on the head of a dynamic hairpin as they deal thoughtfully with this practical oxymoron, and how unfortunate that Baldur Brönnimann and his Bergen-based BIT20 Ensemble's disc begins with Christian

Poltéra not quite pitching his note correctly. An audible realignment of intonation follows, which torpedoes any possibility of a seamless crescendo.

The finale of the Piano Concerto begins with a similarly questionable hiccup as a flurry of semiquavers on a bass drum, articulated usually with a crisp bark, instead has all the rhythmic bite of ice cream. Music like this ought to churn up the minutiae inside the minutiae, and this particular programme, or near variations upon it, has become such a staple on record that such careless slips cannot be cheerfully waved through.

Over the long haul, Ligeti's stories are told successfully. The harmonic spectra that ripple outwards from the opening cascade of *Melodien's* rising scalic patterns are sieved neatly enough into webs of sustainable melody, although Brönnimann's performance lacks the shrewd pacing and structural intrigue of Reinbert de Leeuw (Teldec). Christian Poltéra (eventually) and Joonas Ahonen deliver faithful enough performances of the concertos, but the Chamber Concerto flags up another undermining problem. The basic ensemble sound is pinched and oddly sour, while Ligeti's sudden structural disjoints and stabbing accents are lacking in that

essential serrated edge experienced in Boulez, de Leeuw or Eötvös. Disappointing. **Philip Clark**

Medtner • Rachmaninov

Medtner Piano Concerto No 2, Op 50

Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No 3, Op 30

Marc-André Hamelin *pf* **London Philharmonic Orchestra** / **Vladimir Jurowski**

Hyperion © CDA68145 (82' • DDD)



What an apt coupling this is. The two composers were close friends; Medtner's

Second Concerto, completed in the summer of 1922, is dedicated to Rachmaninov, whose Fourth Concerto (in the course of completion at the same time) is dedicated to Medtner...whose C minor Concerto makes several fleeting references to Rachmaninov's Second and Third Concertos.

Medtner's Op 50 is an extraordinarily tricky assignment for both pianist and conductor but both here and in the Rachmaninov there is a palpable and invigorating rapport between Hamelin and Jurowski. The former is presented with a relentless thicket of notes and few passages of respite; without sight of a score or the pianist, the listener can have little idea of just how difficult the piano part is. The latter has to deal with the tricky coordination of constantly fluctuating rhythms, figurations and tempos with twists and turns that come faster than a Scalextric track, such is the profusion of Medtner's ideas.

Few can illuminate or clarify complex textures quite as well as Marc-André Hamelin and no pianist past or present understands Medtner's idiom better (his recording of the complete sonatas is likely to remain the benchmark). Obviously in vastly superior sound, this is a recording that stands beside the composer's classic account (with the Philharmonia under Issay Dobrowen in 1947 which, however, and unlike Hamelin's, takes Medtner's own suggested cut of 45 bars in the cadenza) and is better recorded than Nikolai Demidenko's compelling 1991 performance on the same label and with the same producer (4/92), coupled with Medtner's less approachable Third Concerto.

As to Hamelin's Rach Three, there are parts that quite swept me away and parts that felt slightly disengaged and routine. Take the very opening, played at a laidback minim=56 (as opposed to the composer's

urgent 72). It sounds rather dour. While some may feel the piano is a tad too dominant in the balance, it allows one unusually to hear the intricate writing in scrupulously observed detail. If Hamelin can occasionally resemble someone who likes a drink but is determined to remain sober, there are passages aplenty where he digs deep for a reading of powerful emotion. Hear how he handles the great central climax of the first movement and its cadenza (the shorter of the two), and with what relish the seasoned chamber musician responds to the woodwind soloists in the Intermezzo. The finale storms home in suitably triumphant fashion. Nevertheless, the concerto's overall timing of 43'11" is surprisingly slow, closer to the young Ashkenazy with Fistoulari than to Janis with Munch or Dorati, Wild with Horenstein and Hough with Litton, all round about the 35'00" to 37'00" mark. The disc has a playing time of 82'09". **Jeremy Nicholas**

► See our Marc-André Hamelin feature on page 16

Nilsson • Skog

Nilsson Violin Concerto^a

Skog Violin Concerto No 1^b

Cecilia Zilliacus *vn* ^b**Helsingborg Symphony**

Orchestra / **Anna-Maria Helsing**; ^a**Västerås**

Sinfonietta / **Fredrik Burstedt**

dB Productions © DBCD179 (64' • DDD)



Recordings are coming thick and fast from the Swedish violinist Cecilia Zilliacus and each argues emphatically that strength of tone, absolute accuracy of intonation and deep lyricism can, after all, stand up to the invigorating steampunk revisionism purveyed by the likes of Vilde Frang and Patricia Kopatchinskaja.

Here we have two resolutely tonal violin concertos written in Sweden within the last six years that both rely, to varying extents, on ostinato, patterning or ground bass to anchor the discourse. In the case of Ylva Skog's 2015 Concerto, it's a reliance on the most minimal versions of those things: fixed root-position orchestral chords that glisten with varying textures or a ground bass that steps through just two notes. Thus, much of Zilliacus's activity over the top is in the manner of a recitative, which suits her just fine. Where the concerto can sound too immobile and repetitive – or just plain stuck, often on quite obvious vernacular-derived material – Zilliacus's playing provides the distraction.

Anders Nilsson's Concerto dates from 2011 but you could easily assume it a

product of the 1930s. In terms of craft, the piece is astonishing. Nilsson uses ostinatos with the same level of panache and wicked skill as Prokofiev and Britten; a good few passages – including the intermittent passacaglia-like chorale of the final movement – recall the locked-down sequencing at the end of the latter's Violin Concerto. Nilsson finds copious such devices for pushing his music forwards and there are always things going on at the fringes too. His melodies are heartfelt, including the skittish but clear main theme of the first movement, and the tonal qualities Zilliacus finds from her Gagliano instrument are as remarkable high up as they are down low. Her poise, control and presence single-handedly cast aside any quibbles as to why such stylistically disorientating music would warrant a recording. **Andrew Mellor**

O'Regan

A Celestial Map of the Sky^a. Latent Manifest.

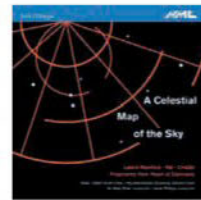
Raï. Chaâbi. Fragments from Heart of Darkness

^a**The Manchester Grammar School Choir;**

Hallé ^a**Youth Choir and Orchestra** /

^a**Sir Mark Elder, Jamie Phillips**

NMC © NMCD220 (73' • DDD • T)



The centrepiece in this collection of recent works by Tarik O'Regan for choir

and/or orchestra is *A Celestial Map of the Sky* (2014). Commissioned in 2015 by The Manchester Grammar School to celebrate its quincentenary in a premiere that brought together – in addition to the school's own choir – the combined forces of the Hallé Orchestra and Youth Choir, *A Celestial Map of the Sky* draws inspiration from two woodcuts of star charts by the Renaissance painter and printmaker Albrecht Dürer, which date from around the same time as the school's foundation.

Rather than surrounding the maps with allegorical figures from ancient Greek and Roman myths, Dürer instead incorporated the images of four ancient astronomers from Europe and further east. It's a rather appropriate metaphor for O'Regan's own inclusive, 'humanist' aesthetic, which also references an eclectic array of musical influences ranging from Renaissance polyphony to the music of North Africa and minimalism.

A Celestial Map of the Sky also draws on a wide range of star-inspired poetic texts from Hopkins, Whitman, Mahmood Jamal, Francis William Bourdillon and Hart Crane. Somehow O'Regan combines these

strands to create a work of focused intensity, reflection and power. It opens with a four-note rising figure on flute and harp (F-C-A flat-E flat) underpinned by glimmering strings in a moment that mixes Haydn's *Creation* with John Adams's *Harmonium*. This soon gives way to a rhythmically animated section, to Whitman's words 'I see the cities of the earth', characterised by assertive unisons and forward propulsion. There follows a quieter instrumental section featuring languid lines and ambiguous harmonies in strings, eventually leading the music back to the opening four-note figure and a partial recapitulation, which finally builds up to a marvellously resounding C major chord.

None of the other works on this disc quite manages to capture the same spark and spontaneity, although O'Regan's reworking of ideas from his chamber opera *Heart of Darkness* (2011) produces several impressive moments, including at one point a lively fugue. Plenty of spark also belongs to *Rai* (2007) and *Chaâbi* (2012), both of which draw on North African (especially Algerian) dance rhythms and patterns. The other star player on this recording is the Hallé Orchestra itself, illuminating with passion and precision the bright colours

of O'Regan's immensely enjoyable and refreshing sound world. **Pwyll ap Siôn**

Saint-Saëns

Cello Concerto No 1, Op 33^a.

Cello Sonatas^b - No 2, Op 123; No 3, Op *posth*

Emmanuelle Bertrand *vc*^b Pascal Amoyel *pf*

^aLucerne Symphony Orchestra / James Gaffigan

Harmonia Mundi © HMM90 2210 (67' • DDD)



Plenty of recordings of the Cello Concerto No 1. Plenty of recordings of the Cello Sonata No 2. Single discs featuring the two together, however, are few and far between – and none of them includes the two extant movements of Saint-Saëns's Cello Sonata No 3, for this is its first recording. So Harmonia Mundi's disc has already got a lot going for it. But there is a further plus: the sound engineering. This is simply a beautiful recording to listen to, the solo cello ideally balanced against both orchestra and piano in a warm, natural acoustic with clarity and presence.

Emmanuelle Bertrand can hold her head high among the big names, engaging, characterful, with a rounded, burnished

tone. She is no slouch when it comes to pyrotechnics but she takes a less ardent view of the concerto than the masterly Steven Isserlis with Michael Tilson Thomas (Sony Classical, 12/93), let alone Mischa Maisky and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra (DG, 2/99), who push things along rather too much for my taste.

The F major Cello Sonata is finely accomplished. Here I prefer Bertrand and Amoyel to the excellent Jamie Walton and Daniel Grimwood (Signum, 10/11), not merely for the piano tone but for their more imaginative handling of the Scherzo (second movement) variations – try the final (eighth) *presto* variation – and more nuanced Romanza.

As to the previously unheard Third Sonata, it was begun in 1913 but not completed until 1919. The night before cellist Joseph Hollmann was due to give the first (private) performance, he turned up at the composer's house to rehearse but instead had to confess that he had left the score in a carriage. Unperturbed, Saint-Saëns then spent the next 24 hours rewriting the entire four movements so that the scheduled soirée could take place. Even then, somehow the manuscript of the final two movements subsequently went missing. The otherwise informative booklet



Toledo: A Festival of Spanish Music
The Rhône: Bacchus & Orpheus
The Danube Festival
The Johann Sebastian Bach Journey
Vivaldi in Venice
Watch the videos at martinrandall.com

'Musical performances of the very highest quality in magnificent surroundings with impeccable organisation.'

Meet our gifted family of festivals.

The UK's leading provider of site-specific music festivals announces an expanded programme for 2017.

We match pieces with the places where they were first heard, such as Beethoven's *Eroica* in the Lobkowitz Palace in Vienna, the works of Vivaldi performed in Venice, and J.S. Bach in the towns and cities in East Germany where he lived and worked – guaranteeing the highest musicianship.

As well as access to all the concerts, the festival package includes accommodation, meals, lectures and much else. Audience numbers vary from 100 to 250, but with MRT staff on hand throughout you will never feel merely part of a crowd.



MARTIN
RANDALL
TRAVEL

LEADING EXPERTS IN CULTURAL TOURS

Contact us:
+44 (0)20 8742 3355
martinrandall.com

ATOL 3622 | ABTA Y6050 | AITO 5085

Winners of Best Small Holiday Company for Customer Service, Best Escorted Tours Holiday Company (Small) and Best Special Interest Holiday Company (Small) at the British Travel Awards 2016

does not reveal how the lengthy (9'27") opening *Allegro animato* and *Andante sostenuto* (4'57") came to light. Late Saint-Saëns is not his best period but it's worth investigating for the magical end of the *Allegro* if nothing else. Nevertheless, the disc has rather more than just this USP to recommend it. **Jeremy Nicholas**

R Strauss

Eine Alpensinfonie, Op 64^a.

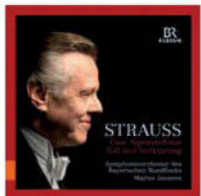
Tod und Verklärung, Op 24^b

Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra /

Mariss Jansons

BR-Klassik © 900148 (75' • DDD)

Recorded live at the *Herkulesaal, Munich, February 24-28, 2014; *Philharmonie, Munich, October 13-15, 2016



Three recordings of the *Alpensinfonie* have appeared within the past year, with this one from Mariss Jansons following those from Sebastian Weigle (Oehms, 11/16) and Kent Nagano (Farao, A/16). Recorded at two Munich concerts barely six months ago, this new account is undoubtedly the best played and best recorded. In fact, it's probably one of the best played and best recorded *tout court*.

The Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra bring a burnished, polished sound to every strand of Strauss's kaleidoscopic score, and BR-Klassik's engineering is a marvel of presence, clarity and detail: it's a big improvement on the the dull, distant sound you get on Jansons's earlier Concertgebouw account and a step-up, too, from the decent engineering of Franz Welser-Möst's rather matter-of-fact reading with the same orchestra and label (9/14).

Jansons conjures up some thrilling moments, and, as a sonic spectacle and display of virtuosity and musicianship, this disc takes some beating. You'll have to go a long way to find a more glitteringly brilliant 'Waterfall', for example, or a more impressively executed account of the 'Storm'. There are dozens of moments where one hears details of the score that are usually lost in the congestion.

Strangely, though, such accomplishment has a flipside: a failure to convey through those notes the poetic feelings that underpin them, especially when we get to the work's final third. That 'Storm' doesn't, for me, evoke the feeling – literal or metaphorical – of being in a storm, of man pitted against implacable nature.

Nor do 'Sunset' and 'Quiet settles' fully reach the poetic heights or plumb the

emotional depths: the unison violins in the former don't strain at the leash, while the phrasing of the winds' big theme in the latter strikes me as strangely laboured. Similarly, 'On the summit', despite the sonic splendour, feels slightly stately (and a little brass-heavy in the balance), lacking the visceral sense of exhilaration this moment can convey.

Tod und Verklärung is every bit as well played and recorded, and the work has rarely sounded better. But here too, as in the longer piece, things are predominantly bright and brilliant, with Jansons apparently reluctant to dip a toe into the swirling philosophical undercurrents.

Hugo Shirley

Alpensinfonie – selected comparison:

RCO, Jansons (A/08) (RCOL) RCO08006

R Strauss

Le bourgeois gentilhomme – Suite, Op 60.

Ariadne auf Naxos – Symphony-Suite

(arr D Wilson Ochoa)

Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra / JoAnn Falletta

Naxos © 8 573460 (76' • DDD)



There seems to be a trend these days for creating new orchestra-only

arrangements of music from Strauss's operas. We've just had a new *Elektra* Suite from Manfred Honeck in Pittsburgh (Reference Recordings, 1/17), and now, up the interstate in Buffalo, JoAnn Falletta gives us a 'Symphony-Suite' based on *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

It has its virtues as a coupling for the *Bourgeois gentilhomme* Suite, and D Wilson Ochoa's arrangement is eminently sensible and impressively sewn together. It offers 35 minutes of music from the 1916 score in the order in which it appears, interpolating the Interlude from 1912 to break up 'Es gibt ein Reich' and the glorious final duet.

One shouldn't be a purist about these sorts of arrangements: ever the pragmatist, Strauss set a precedent with the suites he cobbled together himself or sanctioned from his other operas. But *Ariadne* without words (and what words they are!) sounds thin and unrewarding indeed: the vocal lines get wearily sung out by a series of polite instruments, while the final duet, though it achieves a rousing final climax, footles along prettily but entirely inconsequentially in the absence of an Ariadne and Bacchus – it seems apt that the track-listing gives us Hofmannsthal's poetic 'Gibt es kein Hinüber?' also in painfully prosaic translation as 'Where is the passage?'

Matters aren't helped by dull recorded sound and playing that is clean and efficient but hardly inspiring, all of which means that the *Bourgeois gentilhomme* Suite is hardly competitive in a packed catalogue either. The *Ariadne* Suite is an interesting experiment and a useful arrangement, no doubt, for orchestras unwilling or unable to stage the opera itself. On disc, though, we don't really need to make such compromises. **Hugo Shirley**

R Strauss

'Tone Poems, Vol 5'

Metamorphosen. Symphonia domestica, Op 53

SWR Symphony Orchestra, Baden-Baden

and Freiburg / François-Xavier Roth

SWR Music © SWR19021CD (69' • DDD)



François-Xavier Roth's Strauss series with his SWR orchestra

has been garnering glowing reviews in these pages. This new instalment emphatically deserves another one.

As before, one of this latest disc's greatest assets is the outstanding quality of the recorded sound. Airy and incredibly detailed, analytical but never clinical, transparent but not short of weight: it means that even Strauss's most congested passages come across with astonishing clarity.

That, of course, is of enormous benefit in that often most congested of works, *Symphonia domestica*. Here, with an orchestra on stunningly virtuoso form, it almost dances along. The woodwind-playing is brilliantly characterful and vivid; the strings, more silky than velvety, are no less alive and responsive, and Roth coaxes some exquisitely tender phrasing from them.

The sound of the full orchestra, though not as glamorous or burnished as Karajan's BPO (who is?), is immaculately blended, and there's some especially refined and musical playing from the brass – listen to the way they phrase in the *Adagio*'s various climaxes (at 2'10", for example). Roth's conducting is on the swift side, and some might feel he rushes on a couple of occasions. But it's irresistibly full of energy and life: the sheer hustle and bustle and invention of the music is conveyed beautifully.

Above all, though the pictorial details are never short-changed, Roth manages to make this sometimes intractable score make such clear and obvious symphonic sense. The result will surely win over



thedallasoperaTM

The Linda and Mitch Hart

Institute *for*
Women Conductors

TWO-WEEK PROGRAM
November 6-18, 2017

Women conductors from around the world are invited to apply to the third residency of the Linda and Mitch Hart Institute of Women Conductors (IWC) at The Dallas Opera, a unique program designed to further the careers of distinctively talented female conductors. Accomplished female singers, opera coaches, composers, accompanists and instrumentalists with established careers looking to move into conducting are also encouraged to apply. This unique and internationally well-publicized program includes hands-on conducting opportunities with the full Dallas Opera Orchestra.

For more information on the institute, selection, faculty and eligibility visit dallasopera.org/womenconductors

Application deadline: April 30, 2017

Submit Applications:
dallasopera.org/womenconductors

Domestica sceptics and is in many ways a revelation: a recording that confidently repositions the piece very much as a work of the nascent 20th century, not as a dubious hangover of the 19th.

Matters are a little bit more complex with *Metamorphosen*, a work that laments the tragic course of the very century that the *Symphonia domestica* seems here to announce. Roth and his players bring similar virtues to this late work, so it's an account that is perhaps a little bit short on elegiac gravitas, and one that arguably doesn't plumb the depths that, say, Karajan's various accounts do, moving though it is.

Again, though, the sheer musical intelligence on display brings enormous rewards, and the performance – recorded a year after *Domestica* with no less clarity, but at a slightly lower level – highlights the sheer ingenuity once more of Strauss's invention.

A poorly translated booklet-note is a minor drawback, but this is an outstanding release. Highly recommended. **Hugo Shirley**

Tchaikovsky

Violin Concerto, Op 35. Sérénade mélancolique, Op 26. Souvenir d'un lieu cher, Op 42 – Méditation

Moonkyung Lee *vn*

London Symphony Orchestra / Miran Vaupotić
Navona © NV6079 (58' • DDD)



First impressions count. The opening orchestral *tutti* of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto is described *Allegro moderato* with a metronome marking of crotchet=126. Miran Vaupotić barely hits crotchet=100 with the London Symphony Orchestra in this new recording, a ponderous, pedestrian start. His tentative tempo seems to affect the soloist, Korean violinist Moonkyung Lee, for her initial phrases are especially cautious. Lee has a satisfying mahogany tone but her intonation up in the stratosphere wavers perilously, especially around the staccato triplets of the first movement's *più mosso* section (bar 107, 5'40"), although she attacks the trills that follow aggressively enough. Her cadenza (from 10'28") is cleanly executed but without any great interpretative ideas – just a sense of someone wanting to get through the notes.

The Canzonetta reveals a warm lower register but the LSO's string tone is uncharacteristically insipid. There are lovely flute and clarinet exchanges, though

Lee doesn't match their veiled dynamics. Vaupotić sets a good initial pace for the finale and Lee responds with her most secure playing of the concerto. It really dances. But then Vaupotić slams on the brakes at the *poco meno mosso* (bar 145, 1'59") where only a slight pulling-up is suggested.

The *Méditation* and *Sérénade mélancolique* fillers go pleasantly enough, but for an excellent (budget) disc containing all Tchaikovsky's *concertante* works for violin, Ilya Kaler on Naxos is superb. **Mark Pullinger**
Selected comparison – coupled as above:
Kaler, Russian PO, Yablonsky (4/07) (NAXO) 8 557690

Tüür

Peregrinus ecstaticus^a. *Noësis*^a.

Le poids des vies non vécues

^{ab}**Christoffer Sundqvist** *cl*^{ac}**Pekka Kuusisto** *vn*

Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra / Hannu Lintu
Ondine © ODE1287-2 (58' • DDD)



It is Erkki-Sven Tüür's tight control of material and form that frees his notes up to

have such impact. The concerto for violin and clarinet *Noësis* (2005) charts 'the slow but continuous integration of different elements, so that they finally form a new inseparable substance'. That quote from the composer is actually printed in the booklet for ECM's recording with Carolin and Jörg Widmann under Anu Tali.

No prizes for guessing that this performance from Pekka Kuusisto and Christoffer Sundqvist is altogether more foregrounded, with more character, snarl and bite and therefore a greater sense of clarity to support the structural outline: the opposition of those elements (scales from the soloists) and their eventual agreement. Things may be clearer on this newcomer but it's a mark of the piece's quality that the Widmanns' very different approach is still a joy to listen to.

Tüür's newer clarinet concerto *Peregrinus ecstaticus* (2012) is similarly taut, juxtaposing two groups of material that circle around one another until you realise something bigger, perhaps derived from those ideas themselves, is in control. Or perhaps you don't. It's fine just to marvel at Tüür's organic and dynamic use of texture – of which I could list countless examples, but the most obvious is his conjuring of extraordinary low sounds – and his control of the resulting energy, which surely owes a little to Magnus Lindberg.

In *Les poids des vies non vécues* (2014) Tüür reveals his Baltic soul most clearly. This 'small Requiem for those whose lives

have been disrupted', which treads downwards in the manner of a lament, is not a filler but a deeply moving interlude. Hannu Lintu's Finnish Radio SO show their class in all three performances, each full of considered phrasing, deep listening and impressive agility (the same can be said of the soloists). Tüür is blossoming into a composer of true significance. Go listen.

Andrew Mellor

Noësis – comparative version:

C & J Widmann, Nordic SO, Tali (2/11) (ECM) 476 3799

Weinberg

Chamber Symphonies – No 1, Op 145; No 2, Op 147^a; No 3, Op 151; No 4, Op 153^b. Piano Quintet, Op 18 (arr Pushkarev/Kremer)^c

^b**Mate Bekavac** *cl*^{ac}**Andrei Pushkarev** *perc*

Kremerata Baltica / Gidon Kremer *vn*

^b**Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla**

ECM New Series © ② 481 4604 (159' • DDD)



In 1988 Mieczysław Weinberg claimed he started using the term 'chamber symphony'

because he 'didn't want to continue the sequence of high numbers (after Symphony No 20)' but that the first two – completed in 1987 – differed 'neither in length nor in character from the [chamber-orchestral] Second, Seventh or Tenth Symphonies'. All are scored for strings with the odd extra: timpani in No 2; clarinet and triangle in the then unwritten No 4 of 1992. But Symphony No 20 was composed in 1988 after the first two chamber symphonies and the Third (1991) and Fourth (1992) were coeval with Symphony No 21, *Kaddish*, and succeeded by the unfinished No 22 (1993-94).

So far, so disingenuous; many composers fib. Weinberg's mentor, Shostakovich, was a master of the art, as were – to pluck two names at random – Sibelius and Villa-Lobos. Was Weinberg distracting people's attention from these two chamber symphonies being reworkings of his unpublished Second and Third String Quartets (1940 and 1944 respectively)? The First Quartet had been reworked – as a quartet – in 1986 as Op 141. In the end, he fashioned new works from the old material by fusing convincingly transcription, revision and recomposition, as again with Chamber Symphony No 3, a reworking of the Fifth Quartet (1945). Chamber Symphony No 4, conducted here with breathtaking intensity by Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, is wholly new and a web of self-quotations from earlier works.

Kremerata Baltica have a deal of experience in playing both Weinberg and Shostakovich, and understand how to make the two composers' music sound distinct. The playing by the orchestra and soloists is compelling and vivid, tempos on the swift side on the whole (and none the worse for that). Those possessing Svedlund's pioneering accounts (issued variously by Olympia, Alto – nla – and Chandos) or Rachlevsky's (who omitted No 2) can rest content with those finely achieved accounts; likewise Bashmet's No 1. However, this new set, directed mostly by Gidon Kremer, is a cut above these forebears in terms of expressive version, virtuosity of performance and superb recorded sound. This is the survey to have, complete on two discs, *and* you get a fine transcription (for piano, percussion and strings) of Weinberg's 1944 Piano Quintet, providing a touchstone back to the wartime composer. Strongly recommended.

Guy Rickards

Chamber Symphony No 1 – comparative version:

Moscow Sols, Bashmet (1/06) (ONYX) ONYX4007

Chamber Symphonies Nos 1, 3 & 4 – selected comparison:

Kremlin CO, Rachlevsky (CLAV) 50-9811

Chamber Symphonies Nos 3 & 4 – selected comparison:

Helsingborg SO, Svedlund (CHAN) CHSA5146

'British Tone Poems, Vol 1'

Alwyn Blackdown Austin Spring Bantock The Witch of Atlas HB Gardiner A Berkshire Idyll Gurney A Gloucestershire Rhapsody Vaughan Williams The Solent BBC National Orchestra of Wales / Rumon Gamba Chandos © CHAN10939 (77' • DDD)



All but one of the six items on this latest serving of home-grown fare from Rumon Gamba and the BBC NOW for Chandos have already appeared on disc, the exception being Henry Balfour Gardiner's *A Berkshire Idyll* (1913). Skilfully scored for small orchestra, this is a wistfully fragrant nature poem by no means devoid of a spicy harmony or two (for example, the strings' sighing phrase at 1'49"). Gardiner was a lifelong friend of the baritone and self-taught composer Frederic Austin, whose symphonic rhapsody *Spring* (completed in 1907 and extensively overhauled three decades later) makes a buoyant curtain-raiser. Gamba's reading has a touch more polish than Douglas Bostock's commendable pioneering account with the Royal Northern College of Music

Symphony Orchestra (Classico, 10/02, since reissued on Dutton Epoch).

Other treats to savour include Bantock's opulent 1902 tone poem after Shelley, *The Witch of Atlas* (in which these artists manage to hold their own alongside Vernon Handley and the RPO – Hyperion, 5/91), William Alwyn's youthful *Blackdown* (a luminously pretty evocation from 1926 of the North Downs near Haslemere in Surrey) and Ivor Gurney's rousing tribute to his home county, *A Gloucestershire Rhapsody* (1919-21), idiomatically pieced together from the troubled composer's sketches by Philip Lancaster and Ian Venables. The programme concludes with Vaughan Williams's 1902 impression for orchestra *The Solent*, whose haunting principal idea for clarinet the composer used again in his first and last symphonies and film score for *The England of Elizabeth* (1957). Gamba's outstandingly sensitive conception offers far more of a challenge to Paul Daniel's eloquent premiere recording with the RLPO (Albion, 11/13) than did the recent Naxos version (2/17) – and how movingly the final fade-out here presages those illimitably mysterious closing bars of *A Sea Symphony*.

This is altogether most enticing; in fact, I'm already looking forward to the second volume! **Andrew Achenbach**

NEW FROM PROPER MUSIC

CC 72681



DMITRY SHOSTAKOVICH
VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 1 **SOFIA GUBAIDULINA** IN TEMPUS PRAESENS (VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 2) – SIMONE LAMSMA, VIOLIN; THE NETHERLANDS RADIO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA; JAMES GAFFIGAN, CONDUCTOR

CHALLENGE CLASSICS

One of the best violinists of the young generation, Simone Lamsma makes a daring and clever coupling for her first concerto disc: a great masterpiece of the 20th century by Shostakovich, followed by what is by now a classic of our century, Gubaidulina's Second Concerto. A stunningly mature and powerful performance that goes deeply and subtly into two very complex works.

PH 92094



CHARLES L. HANSENS (1802-1871)
THE PLAYFUL LIGHTNESS OF THE CLARINET – EDDY VANOOSTHUYSE, CLARINET; SLOVAK SINFONIETTA; HERMAN ENGELS, CONDUCTOR

PHAEDRA

World premiere recordings of five delightful concertos. Hanssens reveals himself to be a skilful and inventive composer, fully in command of his métier and of the art of orchestration. His idea to combine clarinet and oboe in a double concerto "Morceau de concert" and clarinet and violin in another is definitely original.

PH 292034



SONGS WITHOUT WORDS FOR PIANO TRIO
FELIX MENDELSSOHN (OP.49) | CLARA WIECK (OP. 17) | ROBERT SCHUMANN (OP.88)
I GIOCATORI PIANO TRIO **PHAEDRA**
Clara's masterpiece in a splendid performance. Subtle poetry, warmth, tenderness and suggestive power, which are so characteristic of Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*, all work their magic on this CD. This is music that makes you dream happy dreams and that floods your heart and soul with light and joy.

AVI 855371



FRANZ SCHUBERT
12 SONGS FROM 'SCHWANENGESANG' (VERS. FOR VIOLA AND PIANO) **DMITRY SHOSTAKOVICH** VIOLA SONATA OP. 147 – PAULINE SACHSE, VIOLA; LAUMA SKRIDE, PIANO **AVI-MUSIC**
According to a Greek myth, the voices of swans have an otherworldly beauty, and their song is a foreboding of death. Such ethereal beauty emerges in moments which are to be treasured and preserved with care. The two works on this release stem from two outstanding composers who, at the end of their lives and in thoroughly different contexts, produced creations of lasting value.

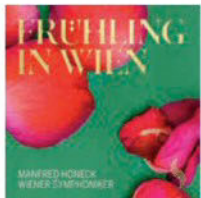


CHALLENGE CLASSICS

WWW.PROPERDISTRIBUTION.COM

'Frühling in Wien'

Beethoven Symphony No 6, 'Pastoral', Op 68 – 'Merry Gathering of Country Folk' **Schönherr** Praterfahrt anno 1880, Op 92a. Tänze aus Österreich, Op 25 **E Strauss** Wien über alles, Op 172 **R Strauss** Schlagobers, Op 70 – Tanz des Kaffees; Träumerei; Finale **Suppé** Dichter und Bauer – Overture **Ziehrer** Hereinspaziert!, Op 518, Weana Mäd'ln, Op 388
Vienna Symphony Orchestra / Manfred Honeck
 Wiener Symphoniker © WSO11 (60' • DDD)
 Recorded live at the Goldner Saal, Musikverein, Vienna, March 26 & 27, 2016



It's hardly surprising that an Austrian conductor who earlier on in his professional

life played in both the Vienna Philharmonic and Vienna State Opera orchestras should perform Viennese light music with a degree of authentic feeling that recalls such past masters as Willi Boskovsky and Clemens Krauss, the latter more so perhaps because Manfred Honeck's sense of style marks him out as one of the most remarkable conductors treading the current circuit. This is his second CD on the Wiener Symphoniker label; the first (10/14), also live, was a programme devoted to works by Eduard, Josef and Johann Strauss.

Here the same mastery of rhythm and phrasing applies, the way Honeck injects a lilt into the central waltzing theme of Suppé's *Poet and Peasant* Overture, for example, and the combination of tenderness and exuberance in a 14-minute sequence from Richard Strauss's sweet-centred 'merry ballet in two acts' about greedily gorging children *Schlagobers* ('Whipped Cream'). As to Carl Michael Ziehrer's *Hereinspaziert!* waltz, Gustavo Dudamel also programmed the piece as part of his 2017 debut Vienna New Year's Concert (reviewed last month); both performances are excellent, the Vienna Philharmonic, as recorded, marginally richer in tone than Honeck's Vienna Symphony, yet with Honeck there are those tiny, giveaway expressive inflections that suggest vintage branding, the sort of playing that has you smiling in appreciation.

I was surprised to hear the 'Merry Gathering of Country Folk' from Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony turn up out of context, albeit in a lightly accented account, with added trills among the woodwinds for the swift, rustic middle section. Fingers crossed for a complete performance from the same source: given the evidence of what we have here, it would be a *Pastoral* to reckon with. Applause is

limited to the very end of the concert, tailing Eduard Strauss's lively *Wien über alles*. Superb on all counts. **Rob Cowan**

'New Era'

Danzi Concertino, Op 47^a. Fantasy on 'Là ci darem la mano' **Mozart** Don Giovanni – Batti, batti, o bel Masetto^b. Mitridate, re di Ponto – Se viver non degg'io^b (both arr Stephan Koncz)
C Stamitz Clarinet Concerto No 7 **J Stamitz** Clarinet Concerto
Andreas Ottensamer *cl/basset cl/basset hn*
^b**Emmanuel Pahud** *fl^a* **Albrecht Mayer** *cor ang*
Potsdam Chamber Academy
 Decca © 481 4711DH (72' • DDD)



It was the 18th-century Mannheimers that put the clarinet on the map and inspired Mozart to mine the full expressive potential of this beautiful latecomer to the woodwind family. The Berlin Philharmonic's principal clarinetist Andreas Ottensamer – now signed exclusively to Decca – and friends here celebrate three generations of composers associated with the elite Mannheim Orchestra, admirably dubbed 'an army of generals' by the music historian Charles Burney.

Don't expect revelations in the three concertos on this disc, one each by Stamitz father and son, plus a concertino for clarinet and cor anglais (arranged from the original for clarinet and bassoon) from c1815 by Franz Danzi. By Mozartian standards – impossible to suppress with Classical works for clarinet – the melodic and harmonic invention can be gracefully predictable, the range of expression circumscribed. There are no must-keep tunes. But all three concertos, neatly crafted and expertly written for the clarinet, offer gentle pleasures. Best, I think, is the Danzi, harmonically more enterprising than the two Stamitz works, as you'd expect from its date, with a beguiling slow movement that sounds like a *bel canto* duet reimaged for woodwind. The Carl Stamitz concerto from the mid-1770s is the most superficially Mozartian music here, with its elegant chromaticisms and sighing appoggiaturas – though its *contredanse* finale fails to locate the fine line between rustic jollity and banal repetitiveness. Danzi is also represented courtesy of frolicking variations on the popular hit from *Don Giovanni*, which end up by transforming the tune into a whooping polonaise.

While period instruments would have brought a sharper, more pungent tang to

the sonorities, it would be hard to imagine classier performances than these. With his velvet, sensuous tone and minute control of dynamics, Ottensamer surely has few peers among today's clarinetists. In both Stamitz concertos and the Danzi-Mozart variations, his refinement of phrasing and subtle dynamic shading is allied to a sense of fun and fantasy, not least in his improvised lead-ins and cadenzas. He and the alert Potsdam band ensure that rhythms are kept light and supple. His Berlin colleagues Emmanuel Pahud and Albrecht Mayer match him all the way in finesse, with Pahud and Ottensamer providing luxury duetting in two modestly entertaining Mozart opera arrangements. A perfect disc for any clarinet lover who fancies 70 minutes of mellifluous, tension-free listening. **Richard Wigmore**

'Overtures, Preludes and Intermezzi'

Bellini Norma – Overture **Boiti** Mefistofele – Prelude to the Prologue **Catalani** La Wally – Act 3, Introduction **Donizetti** Ugo, conte di Parigi – Overture **Giordano** Siberia – Act 2, Prelude **Leoncavallo** I Medici – Act 1, Prelude; Act 3, Prelude. Pagliacci – Intermezzo **Ponchielli** La Gioconda – Dance of the Hours **Puccini** Edgar – Act 4, Prelude. Madama Butterfly – Intermezzo **Rossini** La pietra del paragone – Overture **Verdi** Un giorno di regno – Overture. I Lombardi – Act 3, Prelude to the Trio
La Scala Philharmonic Orchestra / Riccardo Chailly
 Decca © 483 1148DH (77' • DDD)



At first, this looks like a random collection of overtures, preludes and intermezzos

gathered by Riccardo Chailly, mixing the familiar with the unfamiliar. However, they are all from operas which premiered in Milan – although not quite all at La Scala, as the Leoncavallo operas premiered down the road at the Teatro Dal Verme. Chailly 'sells' this music like nobody else today. I grew up with Herbert von Karajan's collection of intermezzo lollipops, swooning at the syrupy Berlin Philharmonic strings in *Manon Lescaut* and *Notre Dame*. Only the Pagliacci intermezzo from that collection appears on this disc, but Chailly's approach is leaner, with more of an eye for dramatic possibilities.

Chailly's scrupulous care over dynamics leaps out in the very first phrases of Verdi's overture to *Un giorno di regno* – here going under the title of *Il finto Stanislao* which, according to the conductor, was how it



Manfred Honeck and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra combine tenderness and exuberance in a vernal Viennese programme

premiered at La Scala in 1840. It fairly zings along.

The playing of the Filarmonica della Scala is electric, although the acoustic is a little tubby. Strings are light and nimble in Rossini and Donizetti, caressing the gentle Act 3 introduction to Catalani's *La Wally* with great tenderness. Bellini's Overture to *Norma* bristles with drama, while Rossini's for *La pietra del paragone* bubbles along infectiously. It's a shame that *The Thieving Magpie* (premiered at La Scala 200 years ago) doesn't get a look in, although Chailly has recorded it before. 'The Song of the Volga Boatmen' puts in an appearance in a real rarity, Giordano's *Siberia*.

The Scala soloists get a chance to shine, especially leader Francesco De Angelis in the saccharine violin *concertante* solo that opens Act 3 of *I Lombardi*, stylishly fiddled. Ponchielli's 'Dance of the Hours' will have toes tapping, even if it will always conjure memories of hippos in tutus!

The lengthy intermezzo from *Madama Butterfly* demonstrates that Chailly – along with Antonio Pappano – is the leading Puccini conductor of today, and the brassy bombast of the opening to Boito's *Mefistofele* that concludes this splendid disc had me wishing the entire Prologue – nay, the entire opera – followed. **Mark Pullinger**

'Viola Concertos'

Baksa Viola Pannonica **Bruch** Romanze, Op 85

Telemann Viola Concerto, TWV51:G9 **Weber**

Andante and Rondo ungarese

Herbert Kefer *va* **Vorarlberg Symphony**

Orchestra / Martin Kerschbaum

Nimbus © NI5961 (59' • DDD)



Few contemporary composers are harder to pin down than Andreas Baksa

(1950-2016). Too easily confused with the American composer Robert Baksa (*b*1938), he frustrates all but the most determined of Googlers. And, so far as nationality is concerned, he eschews categorisation. Born in the area of Romania bordering Hungary, he studied with Bartók and played violin in the opera orchestra of Klausenberg, then in East Germany, before escaping to Austria in the 1970s. So it's not surprising that his music, by turns rhythmically muscular and hauntingly languid, reflects a variety of cultures.

This is evident not least in *Viola Pannonica*, the main draw on this programme from the Austrian viola player Herbert Kefer. Premiered at the Weinklang

Festival in Germany in 2010, this charts a musical journey through the ancient Roman province of Pannonia, a territory in central Europe spread over parts of present-day Hungary, Austria, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. As such it is predictably bitty, perhaps the only piece to juxtapose an ironic Viennese waltz with soulful Croatian song. But what it lacks in cohesion it makes up in individual moments: the headstrong opening 'Hungarian' theme; its forays into Romanian gypsy music. It certainly fires up Kefer and the Vorarlberg SO under Martin Kerschbaum, who enjoy its rhythmic ingenuity; in their hands the final csárdás breathes fire.

And all credit to Kefer for devising a programme as thematically interlinked as it is diverse. Weber's *Andante and Rondo ungarese*, Op 35, similarly draws on Hungarian colouring, mostly through the rhythms of the solo line and accompaniment, while Telemann's Viola Concerto in G, like *Viola Pannonica*, is in essence a collection of character pieces. Both showcase Kefer's virtuosity and poise, but it's in the disc's final offering – Bruch's elegiac Romance in F, Op 85 – that Kefer's lustrous tone and capacity for introspection come into their own. **Hannah Nepil**

Brahms: Ballades, Op 10

British pianist **Jonathan Plowright** shares strong opinions about this music with Jeremy Nicholas

Jonathan Plowright is talking about the actual physical score from which he likes to play Brahms. 'I use the Henle edition – for consistency, the layout and other factors like the colour of the paper,' he says. 'All these small things make a difference. The Wiener Urtext edition, for example, is a lighter, very white paper, and I find that really difficult. Not that it gives you any more insight into the music, you understand! It's just that the Henle is nicer to look at.'

We have met to discuss the Op 10 Ballades, a set of pieces which features on the penultimate volume of Plowright's universally acclaimed series for BIS of the entire solo piano works of Brahms. Dedicated to Brahms's friend the composer and conductor Julius Otto Grimm (1827-1903), these four short lyric pieces were composed in 1854, the year after the composer first met Grimm and which marked the beginning of his lifelong affection for Clara Schumann.

'The overriding feeling I get with the Ballades is one of quiet,' Plowright continues. 'In a lot of Brahms, I find voices singing because of his earlier times spent with choirs. And the first part of the D minor Ballade No 1 feels very much like a choir to me. He loves going to bare fifths. It is phrased in long breaths. But what gives it away for me is the very first full bar, after the *acciaccatura* [grace note], where the two quavers have dots above and below them. Now, in my opinion, whenever Brahms does that it means he wants an aerated sound – not floated as such, but with a kind of breathing on every note. He uses it everywhere. I've always felt that there's a lot of breathing of air in his music.'

The D minor Ballade (subtitled 'After the Scottish ballad "Edward" in Herder's "Voices of the People"'), like its three companions, presents a very different view of the ballade form introduced by Chopin only 18 years earlier. And it is similarly apparent that individual pianists present divergent yet equally convincing views of the work. For example, Wilhelm Backhaus, who knew Brahms, puts in an unmarked *sempre accelerando* on the second page alongside Brahms's *sempre crescendo*. 'He felt the need to,' says Plowright, 'but I don't. I like to keep it *ben tenuto* (as marked in bar 28). It colours the whole section. Also there's a long way to go and if you start pushing too early – it's throwing the game away too soon. And if you have speeded up, it's difficult to play the return of the theme *pesante*. You will have lost some power.'



Jonathan Plowright on the Ballades: 'The overriding feeling I get is one of quiet'

In Ballade No 2 in D major, Backhaus again takes a view that's completely different from Plowright's: his recording is 4'49" in duration as opposed to the latter's 6'18". Backhaus plays the *molto staccato e leggiero* section (6/4 in B major) two-in-a-bar. 'Yes, well my tempo is based on the *doppio movimento* of the previous – *Allegro non troppo* – section,' counters Plowright, 'which in turn relates to the opening *Andante*.' He continues, clearly stating his case. 'Look at the beginning. You'll see that the left hand is basically a rocking motion. It rises and falls. Now, if you pedal all the way through, it doesn't rise at all. It stays on the ground because you never lose that bottom D. So I pedal each crotchet. It's actually quite difficult to do. The last beat of bar 2 is a tied quaver A in the left hand. Then, on the first beat of the next bar, with the same left hand, I take the bottom A of the right hand's A-F sharp-D chord – because I don't want



The historical view

Albert Lockwood

Notes on the Literature of the Piano
(University of Michigan Press: 1940)

'The First Ballade, "Edward," and the second one, unnamed, should be known to all pianists. The third is less interesting, and the fourth is arid.'

James Parakilas

Ballads without Words: Chopin and the Tradition of the Instrumental Ballade
(Amadeus Press: 1992)

'The common title "Ballade" makes sense, then, as a description not so much of the nature of each piece as of the relationships among them.'

Jan Swafford

Johannes Brahms
(Macmillan: 1998)

'In their style, and in being short, separate character pieces, the Four Ballades set Brahms's future course as a piano composer. But he did not know that in 1854.'

to spread it. To counteract all that, I play the right hand in fingered octaves.'

I query this because my venerable Peters edition, edited by (Liszt pupil) Emil von Sauer, has the chords on the first and second beats of bar 3 marked to be spread. 'No,' says Plowright, 'not in the Urtext. Again, there's that marvellous attention to detail. Look at bars 5 and 6 in No 2 and you'll see a hairpin going to the second chord and then a *decrescendo* from the second beat to the fourth. But then look at the comparable passage later, and in those two bars the *crescendo* goes to the third beat with the *decrescendo* from the third to the fourth.'

No 2 is written in the parallel major of No 1; No 3 is in the relative minor of No 2; No 4 is in the parallel major of No 3 but ends, despite the B major cadence, in the two sharps of No 2. This interconnectivity has been extended by some commentators, who have likened Brahms's Op 10 to four sonata movements, with No 3, 'Intermezzo', providing the *scherzo* (in fact, the manuscript shows that Brahms originally entitled it 'Scherzino'). Plowright recognises that 'there's always a certain demonic side to Brahms'. No 3, he feels, is an example of this: 'Brahms, the *enfant terrible*. Shifting the bar-line. It's very typical of him. The first bars you feel must be the first beat, they are so strong. But they're not. They're the last beat! It throws you. Then in bar 9 he throws you again, by a different means. He doesn't want you to feel comfortable at all. There's no feeling of: "We've got a rhythm – we know where we are." The middle section (in F sharp major) has that wonderful choral quality I was talking about.'

'It's a picture of pure, hopeless desolation – nothing left to live for. It's fascinating as it comes from a young man' – Jonathan Plowright

Moving to Ballade No 4, my Peters edition has *Pedal mit jedem Takt* inserted under the main theme. I inform him: pedal with every beat. 'Not in my edition,' comes the response. Julius Katchen plays No 4 almost as a one-in-a-bar Viennese waltz, a dissimilar concept to Plowright's. 'I know,' he says, 'but you see, whenever I see *andante*, I see it as a crotchet tempo as opposed to a dotted minim or anything else.' I ask him why he thinks Brahms provided no metronome markings. 'I don't know. Maybe he thought they were too restrictive. Well, no – we musicians are taught from an early age to "always do something". Sometimes, like there, it's better to do nothing.'

'There's one other thing I want to talk about. In No 4, three pages before the end, there's a passage beginning *pianissimo* written in five-bar phrases – but it doesn't feel like five bars. It feels completely natural. And in each of those phrases Brahms puts in hairpins, rising to a climax and then going away. But turn over the page (bar 115 after the bar marked *piano*) and you have a passage with absolutely no pedal markings at all. To my mind that passage is a picture of pure, hopeless desolation. There is nothing left to live for. I find that fascinating because it's coming from a young man. It's only Op 10. And yet he has the confidence to write a 10-bar passage with nothing in it. All it is, is phrasing. Breathing. It's stunning to do that at such a young age. These bars could easily be slotted into one of the late opus numbers and no one would notice. Brahms was fully formed at an incredibly tender age. I see no difference between what they call early, middle and late Brahms.'

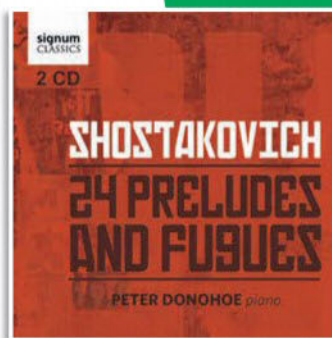
▶ To read our review of Jonathan Plowright's new Brahms CD, turn to page 77

signum
CLASSICS

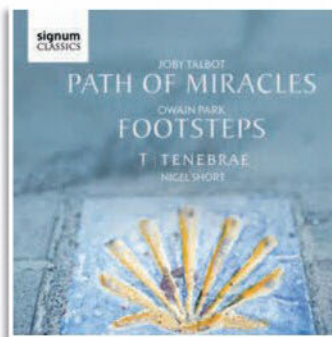


GABRIELI
PAUL MCCREECH
HAYDN
THE SEASONS

A new version of Haydn's great oratorio, recorded for the first time with massive forces as was originally called for by the composer.



PETER DONOHOE
SHOSTAKOVICH
24 Preludes and Fugues
the first in a two-part series of Shostakovich's piano works on Signum Classics.



TENEBRAE & NIGEL SHORT
re-release their landmark recording of Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles*, coupled with a new commission, *Footsteps*, by composer Owain Park. The recording marks their 15th Anniversary season.



PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA
LORIN MAAZEL
release the boxset of the critically-acclaimed Mahler Symphony Cycle.



Chamber



Philip Clark on the British composer Laurence Crane:

'Those earworm miniatures at which Crane excels sketch a whole world and leave your imagination to do the rest' ► **REVIEW ON PAGE 69**



Lindsay Kemp enjoys 17th-century Italian violin music:

'Technically flawless and effortlessly stylish, Leila Schayegh has one of the most seductive Baroque violin sounds' ► **REVIEW ON PAGE 73**

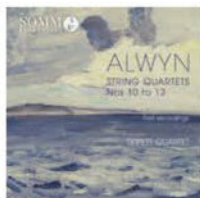
Alwyn

String Quartets – No 10, 'En voyage';

No 11; No 12, 'Fantasia'; No 13

Tippett Quartet

Somm © SOMMCD0165 (70') • DDD



Although William Alwyn's extensive catalogue includes three 'official' string

quartets dating from 1953, 1975 and 1984, his relationship with the genre stretches all the way back to 1920 when, as a 15-year-old, he wrote a String Quartet in B minor. By 1936 he had completed no fewer than 13 specimens; all were subsequently withdrawn by the fastidious composer.

Interestingly, Alwyn's distinguished composition teacher at the Royal Academy of Music, Sir John Blackwood McEwen (1868-1948), himself penned an invigorating chain of 16 string quartets, and in Alwyn's Tenth from 1932 (entitled *En voyage*) I detect an appreciative nod towards McEwen's bracing Sixth String Quartet (*Biscay*). Written while on a nine-month tour of Australia as an examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, and inspired in part by John Masefield's 1902 anthology *Salt Water Poems and Ballads*, this is a richly enjoyable piece, its two finely sustained slow movements ('Departure' and 'The lonely waters') forming a lively contrast with two strongly appealing quicker ones ('Sea birds' and 'Trade winds').

Rather more of a personal voice shines through in the Eleventh (1933), and its tenderly expressive *Moderato e quieto* finale in particular, while the one-movement Twelfth (composed in July 1935 and inscribed to Alan Bush) is entirely different again in its gritty intensity and frequently daring harmonic scope. Written in 1936 but not heard until the autumn of 2015 when it was premiered by the Cavaleri Quartet (at a concert in Blythburgh, Suffolk, as part of that year's William Alwyn Festival), the by turns meaty and

capricious Thirteenth comprises just two movements, the brooding first of which Alwyn promptly orchestrated for two horns, timpani and strings, and renamed *Tragic Interlude*.

Really excellent playing from the Tippett Quartet throughout, vividly captured by Paul Arden-Taylor's microphones in the sympathetic surroundings of St Nicholas Parish Church in Thames Ditton. For Alwyn acolytes this fascinating issue constitutes essential listening.

Andrew Achenbach

Beethoven • Franck

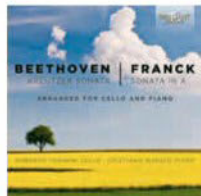
Beethoven Violin Sonata No 9,

'Kreutzer', Op 47 (arr Franchomme)

Franck Violin Sonata (arr Delsart)

Roberto Trainini *vc* **Cristiano Burato** *pf*

Brilliant © 95191 (69') • DDD



'Up high it sounds nasal, and down low it grumbles': Dvořák's supposed comment

about the solo cello came to mind while listening to these two adaptations of famous violin sonatas. Not that there's a great deal of 'down low' in Auguste Franchomme's 1867 transcription of Beethoven's *Kreutzer* Sonata. Franchomme was nothing if not a formidable technician and his arrangement attempts to translate the full virtuoso brilliance of Beethoven's violin-writing to a very different instrument. And while there's definitely a certain satisfaction in hearing Beethoven's crunchy spread chords transferred to the ringing sonority of the cello, that also means a great deal of scurrying high-pitched passagework.

That, unfortunately, is where Roberto Trainini is weakest. His tone isn't intrinsically unattractive, but it's wiry and tight, making it sound forced in the passages where the cello battles against Cristiano Burato's bright-sounding piano and offering little by way of tonal warmth in Beethoven's more lyrical passages. The

pair are at their best in the central variations: Burato's playing has an understated wit, although Trainini's intonation can wobble slightly when he reaches the stratosphere. Overall, this isn't always easy on the ear, and that's not wholly the performers' fault.

César Franck's A major Violin Sonata has much more of a pedigree as a cello piece – the composer himself authorised Jules Delsart's transcription. Again, this isn't a performance to turn to if you like your Franck lush, though Burato finds a Ravel-like combination of sensuality and clarity, and Trainini's phrasing is never less than shapely. But a list of cellists ranging from Jacqueline du Pré (6/90) to Pieter Wispelwey (2/03) has prior claim on your attention here; unless, of course, this unusual coupling happens to be exactly what you're after. **Richard Bratby**

Brahms • Schumann

Brahms Three Violin Sonatas

Schumann Violin Sonata No 1, Op 105 – Allegretto

Ingolf Turban *vn* **Gabriele Seidel-Hell** *pf*

Oehms © OC1867 (71') • DDD

Recorded live in Munich, April 13, 2016



Ingolf Turban marks 30 years of performing with the release of this recital

recorded live in Munich last April. He chooses a different violin for each Brahms sonata – an 1808 Nicolas Lupot for No 1, a 1721 Stradivari for No 2 and, for No 3, an instrument made in 2009 by Martin Schleske. It's an interesting selling point, but is it enough?

Unfortunately for Turban, I'd recently been relistening to the wondrous Gioconda de Vito (Testament, 12/93) and it was very much her sound that was in my head as I turned to this new set. Some would argue that this is unfair pressure – ditto the mention of Josef Suk (Decca, 1/68) or Adolf Busch (EMI) – and that music is not



The Tippett Quartet making the first recordings of four string quartets by William Alwyn

a competitive sport. But when you can acquire such legendary recordings for the same kind of price (or less if you're minded to acquire a box-set) then it is a pertinent point.

Time and again Turban and Gabriele Seidel-Hell demonstrate their ease with this music: tempos are apt, slow movements flow well and there's a good sense of give and take, even if the violin is occasionally overly dominant when accompanying the keyboard.

With the exception of the slow introduction to the Second Sonata, the audience is generally quiet. It is in this work that the two players are at their best, and it unfolds seamlessly, with a notably flowing second movement and a heartfelt finale. However, here and elsewhere the perils of live recording reveal themselves via moments of sour tuning (to give just a few instances: track 1, 4'30"; track 3, 0'10"; track 6, 4'01"; the Schumann encore, track 11, 0'07") and ensemble isn't always completely spot-on.

That would matter less if these interpretations left a really strong mark but they lack the characterisation of the best, and I craved a greater range of dynamics, particularly at the quieter end of the spectrum. In their hands, the opening of

the Third Sonata is fervent from the off, whereas Znaider and Bronfman (RCA, 7/07) are initially much more withdrawn, giving them a greater breadth of expression but also lending the bolder writing a sense of fragility. Or try the finale of the First Sonata, at the point where it magically moves to E flat, the violin's double-stopping marked *espressivo* (track 3, 3'48"): with Turban and Seidel-Hell it feels abrupt; how much more organic it is in the hands of Dumay and Pires (DG, 3/93). Overall, not a game-changer.

Harriet Smith

Brahms · Mahler

Brahms Piano Quartet No 2, Op 26

Mahler Piano Quartet

Anton Barakhovsky *vn* **Alexander Zemtsov** *va*

Wolfgang Emanuel Schmidt *vc* **Eldar Nebolsin** *pf*

Naxos (M) 8 572799 (60' • DDD)



In January I enthused about the first instalment of Brahms piano quartets from this Russo-German alliance. Now comes the remaining quartet from those 2012 sessions, coupled,

enterprisingly, with Mahler's youthful foray into the medium.

They are unfazed by the work's sheer scale and its Schubertian avoidance of extremes of tempo. Alive to the detail too, be it the triplet quaver rest of the quartet's opening theme, which gives the phrase its rhythmic profile, or the striking textures of the *Poco adagio*, piano set against muted strings, before the extraordinary interruption of *una corda* arpeggios on the keyboard that quite undermines the music's contented demeanour. At least that's the effect here; Hamelin and the Leopolds take this, like the Capuçon-Caussé-Angelich line-up, at a distinctly slower pace, suggesting not so much contentment as a sense of awe, the stillness more strikingly broken by those arpeggios (particularly velvety in Angelich's hands).

The easy camaraderie of the slow-paced Scherzo is tellingly conveyed on this new CD, the players relishing the fire of its canonic trio. Yet the Hungarianisms of the finale are perhaps a touch pale compared to Hamelin and the Leopolds, who set a faster tempo and make more of the accentuation. However, Nebolsin et al are irreproachable in the work's final moments, Brahms at his most merrily unclouded.



New Releases

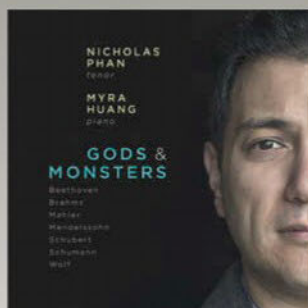


ADRIAN CHANDLER
and **LA SERENISSIMA**
present

THE ITALIAN JOB:

Baroque Instrumental Music
from the Italian States.
Includes works by Albinoni,
Caldara, Corelli, Tartini,
Torelli and Vivaldi.

*"another cracking collection of concertos, and the
variety is gripping."* THE CLASSICAL REVIEW



Tenor **NICHOLAS PHAN**,
supported by pianist
MYRA HUANG, explores
a lifelong fascination with
myths and legends on

GODS & MONSTERS.

Features *lieder* by
Beethoven, Brahms, Mahler,
Mendelssohn, Schubert,
Schumann and Wolf.

*"Phan offers some exquisitely calibrated singing ...
Huang's fleet fingers make light of some fearsomely
virtuosic accompaniments."* BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE



The CYPRESS STRING QUARTET

seals its 20-year legacy
with its final recording, the
two **String Sextets** by
Brahms, joined by long-time
collaborators violist

BARRY SHIFFMAN and
cellist **ZUILL BAILEY**.

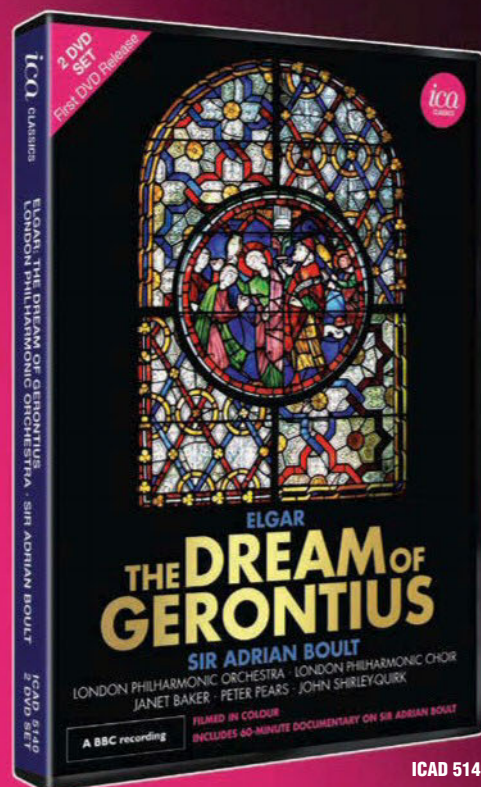
*"they bring to these performances of Brahms's
lushly textured sextets all the fruits of their
experience ... a super-rich sound and an impressively
unanimous ensemble"* THE SUNDAY TIMES

avierecords.com



Distributed in the UK by Proper Music Distribution Ltd, The New Powerhouse,
Gateway Business Centre, Kangley Bridge Road, London SE26 5AN, Tel: 020 8676 5114

SIR ADRIAN BOULT THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS ON DVD FOR THE FIRST TIME



ICAD 5140

*"So beautiful, so magisterial in its intensity that
it feels as though the score is being simply opened
before us."* **Stephen Johnson** - BBC Music Magazine

*"Three great artists at the absolute top of their
game. A must-see."* **Edward Seckerson** - Gramophone

DOUBLE DVD SET

- The only existing film of Sir Adrian Boult conducting *The Dream of Gerontius* from Canterbury Cathedral in 1968
- Stellar cast of soloists: Dame Janet Baker, John Shirley-Quirk and Peter Pears
- Includes a 60-minute documentary on Sir Adrian Boult for his 100th anniversary

www.icaclassics.com

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD RETAILERS

facebook

twitter

Available On
mediav

The Mahler Quartet movement, written when he was 16, sets off promisingly, establishing a dolorous mood with a three-note sighing figure. The problem is that the obsessive use of this and a secondary scalar theme (marked *Entschlossen* – resolutely) comes to sound rather hammy over its 11-minute span. The players give it their all, but even they can't disguise its fundamental shortcomings. **Harriet Smith**

Brahms – selected comparisons:

Leopold Stg Trio, Hamelin (1/07) (HYPE) CDA67471/2
R & G Capuçon, Caussé, Angelich (2/09) (VIRG) 519310-2

Crane

'6 Trios, 2 Solos and 1 Quintet'

10,000 Green Bottles. Air. Hugo Pine. Jurgen Hip. Klavierstücke opus 84 or 85, 'Keith Miller Project'. Len Valley Us. Piano Quintet. Processional. Trio for Ros and Peter
Ives Ensemble
 Nimbus Alliance (6) NI6337 (76' • DDD)



Another month, another disc from the British composer Laurence Crane,

which suggests that the concerted efforts of labels such as Métier, Another Timbre and Hubro to give Crane's music the prominence it merits are paying dividends. Open borders and free passage for all, too, as his music defies the temptation to categorise these delicately crafted miniatures as a product of English whimsy – his disc 'Sound of Horse', which I reviewed in the February issue, was performed by the Norwegian new music ensemble Asamisimasa, and this new selection of compositions, composed between 1986 and 2016, is played by the Ives Ensemble, based in Amsterdam.

Pianist John Snijders, the ensemble's founder, performs two solo works – *Len Valley Us* and *Klavierstücke opus 84 or 85*, 'Keith Miller Project' – and also features in the recently completed 26-minute Piano Quintet, an unusually lengthy statement from the instinctively concise Crane. Is the falling fifth that launches the piece a cunningly placed reference to the opening bars of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony? Could the answering phrase really be a paraphrase of the visiting spaceship motif from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*? I'd certainly like to think so.

Crane goes to great efforts to explain how his Quintet develops as a carefully managed structural relay race. In the listening, though, the fascination of the notes, and their allied associations, locks your ears into each moment. Ripe climaxes

and conventional resolutions appear without preparation. Familiar chords are gently coerced into fleeting cohabitations with unrelated common triads – the very familiarity of this material playing games with tonal memory as chords are placed in unlikely juxtapositions, cryptic harmonic chess moves that also underpin *Klavierstücke opus 84 or 85*. The disc is otherwise made up of those two- or three-minute earworm miniatures at which Crane excels, which sketch a whole world and leave your imagination to do the rest. I like this disc and think you ought to buy it.

Philip Clark

Dvořák

Piano Trios – No 3, Op 65 B130;

No 4, 'Dumky', Op 90 B166

Trio Wanderer

Harmonia Mundi (6) HMM90 2248 (65' • DDD)



Unlike the Florestan Trio, who celebrated their birth with these very two Dvořák trios, the Wanderer have waited 30 years to take them into the studio. It was worth it – even in these two much-recorded works, they make their mark, striking a balance between energy and poise.

The slow introduction to the 'Dumky' has a real sense of purpose, and with the violin solo comes solace, the cello ardently imitating its *portamento*. Once we reach the *Allegro* the accents pungently propel the music forwards without exaggeration. One of the challenges of the 'Dumky' is the constant switching of mood and tempo, yet the Wanderer make it all sound effortless without underplaying the music's contrasts. Some may prefer a slightly leaner cello sound than the refulgent tone Raphaël Pidoux produces at points such as the opening of the *Poco adagio*, in which case sample the Florestan's Richard Lester or the many-hued Bernard Greenhouse in the classic 1969 Beaux Arts account. In the third movement, the Wanderer find a perfect balance between stillness and surging movement, while the concluding sixth movement is a masterclass in textural balance and pacing, drawing you ineluctably into their vivid storytelling.

The Op 65 Trio is no less compelling, and the Wanderer find finesse in the first movement's more inner moments, which contrast very effectively with the full-throated *tuttis*. The Florestan, by comparison, are lighter-toned, the recent Busch Trio version just a tad more spacious, which results in a reading that has

a degree less inevitability. The Wanderer find an irrepressible swing to the *Allegro grazioso* and in its gentler moving middle section they seize the opportunity to relax just a little. Their slow movement features ardent duetting between violin and cello, while the group makes us acutely aware of the finale's Brahmsian elements, more so than the irrepressibly playful Beaux Arts. Preference will be down to personal taste, but this is unquestionably a notable addition to the Dvořák shelves.

Harriet Smith

Selected comparisons:

Florestan Trio (1/97) (HYPE) CDA66895

Beaux Arts Trio (7/71⁸, 8/71⁸) (PHIL) 454 259-2PM2

Busch Trio (9/16) (ALPHA) 238

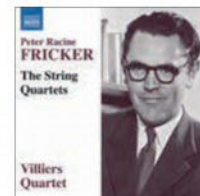
Fricker

'The String Quartets'

String Quartets – No 1, Op 8; No 2, Op 20; No 3. Adagio and Scherzo

Villiers Quartet

Naxos (6) 8 571374 (70' • DDD)



The success of the Heath Quartet's Gramophone Award-winning Tippett

cycle spotlighted the tip of the iceberg of a huge body of music that has slid out of view, including the three quartets of the once fashionable Peter Racine Fricker. His first two initially enjoyed top-flight advocacy from the Amadeus Quartet, no less, for whom the Second was written and premiered, and who recorded it on an Argo LP (12/63, coupled with Britten's Second – my first introduction to Fricker's music). Listening to these marvellously sympathetic, well-prepared performances from the Villiers Quartet (whose survey of Robert Still's four quartets is also highly recommendable – Naxos, 1/15), one wonders why they are not better known.

The seven sections of the First Quartet (1948) skilfully fuse the quartet's traditional structure into a single, bold span. The three-movement Second (1952–53) shows a marked increase in emotional intensity with no let-up in technical finesse. Astonishingly, the Third followed only 23 years later, its impetus being Elliot Carter's Pulitzer Prize-winning Third Quartet (1971), which had shown that the quartet medium was still viable. Fricker's Third is a masterpiece of poise, balance and rediscovered expressive purpose. The five movements are in the leaner, partly serial manner of his later period and culminate in a virtuoso variation-finale.

This is the first recording of Nos 1 & 3 (and the 1943 *Adagio and Scherzo*), though there are YouTube postings of both – the Chilingirian's performance of the Third was much praised by the composer. But these are outclassed by this new recording from the Villiers. Naxos's sound, engineered by Michael Whight, is beautifully balanced and the best these works have enjoyed. Highly recommended.

Guy Rickards

Hvoslef

'Chamber Works No III'

Bel canto^a. *Inventiones I-III*^a.

Kirkeduo^b. Kvartoni^c. Sextet (Post)^d

^aHilde Haraldsen Sveen sop ^cFrode Thorsen recs

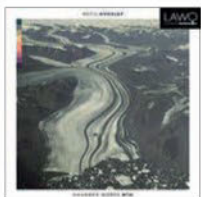
^dGro Sandvik fl ^dDiego Lucchesi cl ^dIlene Channon

hn ^{ad}Ricardo Odriozola vn ^{acd}Einar Røttingen pf

^bKarstein Askeland org ^bEgil Haugland,

^{cd}Stein-Erik Olsen gtrs

LAWO Classics © LWC1117 (65' • DDD)



LAWO continues its series devoted to the chamber music of Ketil Hvoslef (Vol 1 was

reviewed in 4/15) with this most diverse instalment yet. Other composers might have grouped the trilogy that constitutes *Inventiones* (2007) as a single 'violin sonata', but Hvoslef pointedly emphasises the conceptual differences between the three pieces – hence the unfolding from gestural to linear discourse in 'I', the rolling back and forth (like a bottle on a bus, as the composer describes it) in 'II', then the listless Mozart allusions in 'III' that lead to an outcome of surprising resolve.

From opposing duos to unlikely ensembles. *Kvartoni* (1974) combines (wordless) soprano, recorder, guitar and piano, making a virtue of this disparity through a purposeful if understated interplay that keeps listeners guessing as to what, in the event, proves a scintillating conclusion. By contrast, *Bel canto* (2005) is a rondo for violin and piano of real simplicity whose main theme deftly overcomes antagonism prior to its songful final statement. Nor is Hvoslef fazed by the unlikely pairing of *Kirkeduo* (1990), using the organ's delicate upper register and guitar's vibrant strumming in music where opposites audibly get along. Finally, *Sextet (Post)* (1980) collates flute, clarinet, horn, guitar, violin and piano for a lively debate whose only negative aspect was the winding-up of the commissioning body (hence 'Post').

As before, the commitment of these Bergen-based musicians has done Hvoslef proud, with Ricardo Odriozola's detailed

booklet-notes incorporating wry observations by the composer. There should be another two or three instalments before this worthwhile series is concluded.

Richard Whitehouse

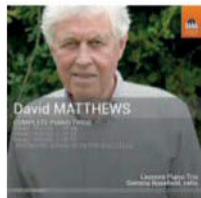
D Matthews

Complete Piano Trios^a.

Journeying Songs, Op 95^b

^bGemma Rosefield vc ^aLeonore Piano Trio

Toccata Classics © TOCC0369 (75' • DDD)



Is it a British thing? Confronted with composers who write fresh, communicative

music, rooted but not trapped in tradition, we...well, we don't neglect them exactly. David Matthews recently published his Op 143 (*A Song for Max* for flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano), and this first recording of what he calls 'my trio of piano trios' is the latest of a series of discs from Toccata Classics devoted to his chamber music. But if we don't neglect them, it can certainly feel like we don't always cherish them as we should.

And we really should. Try the *Adagio* of Matthews's Second Trio, of 1993. Over a measured accompaniment on the piano, violin and cello sing and climb and soar; a long, glorious melody that simply builds and builds. It's almost Schubertian in its cumulative poignancy. Matthews is a romantic. You don't have to read the booklet-notes (in which he explains that he conceived the piece as a memorial to a loved one) to sense that.

True, that movement isn't entirely typical. Matthews tends, like Haydn, to write concise, energetic movements, crammed (again, like Haydn) with ideas. And again, you don't need to know the specific sources of his inspiration – which range from a West Highland seascape in the Second Trio to a deadpan portrait of Hans Keller in the scherzo of the First – to respond to this music. It rewards repeated listening, with Matthews's lyrical gift never far from the surface (and very much front and centre in his *Journeying Songs* for unaccompanied cello, sensitively performed here by the Leonore Trio's cellist Gemma Rosefield).

The Leonore Trio have clearly lived with this music; their playing is alert and stylish, unafraid to let the melodies soar. 'Their performances seem to me definitive,' says Matthews. Not wanting (or needing) to gainsay the composer, I'll only add that the recorded sound is lucid and natural. **Richard Bratby**

Mozart

'Violin Sonatas, Vol 3'

Violin Sonatas – No 12, K27; No 16, K31; No 17, K296; No 23, K306; No 32, K454; No 36, K547

Alina Ibragimova vn Cédric Tiberghien vn

Hyperion © 2 CDA68143 (104' • DDD)



If you are going to play Mozart's fragile childhood sonatas 'for keyboard with

violin accompaniment' on modern instruments – always a risky proposition – this is the way to do it. Avoiding the twin traps of over-inflation and simpering coyness, the symbiotic partnership of Tiberghien and Ibragimova respect the music's innocence while relishing every tiny opportunity for mischief and humour. If the ear is naturally drawn to Tiberghien's limpid, subtly coloured pianism in these keyboard-dominated works, Ibragimova ensures that her discreet contributions always tell, not least in the scampering opening *Allegro* of K31, where the keyboard is egged on by little whoops of delight from the violin.

When Mozart embarked on his first mature duo sonatas in Mannheim in 1778, he was surely intent on surpassing a recent set of sonatas by Joseph Schuster that he had pronounced 'Not bad' – something of an accolade from Mozart. While Schuster's violin parts were adventurous for the time, Mozart goes a stage further and makes the two instruments virtual equals. Both the sonatas of 1778 included here, K296 and K306, are Mozart at his most coltishly exuberant, and get performances to match. Tiberghien, with his crystalline sonorities and pinpoint clarity of articulation, and Ibragimova gleefully savour their jousting dialogues and rapid role-reversals in the fast movements. The opening *Allegros* of both sonatas combine the requisite swagger (on one level, this is high-class show-off music) with a roguish twinkle, while the singing eloquence of the *Andantes* (where Ibragimova uses vibrato sparingly and expressively) underlines the essential vocal nature of Mozart's inspiration.

With the B flat Sonata, K454, of 1784, written for the Mantuan virtuoso Regina Strinasacchi, the violin's emancipation is complete, in music that often sounds like a finely wrought double concerto without orchestra. Again, the players compel the ear with their rhythmic vitality (the outer movements kept supple and airborne), their quick-witted banter and



Tobias Feldmann and Boris Kusnezow record a multicoloured debut disc for Alpha

their care for detail. Ever alive to Mozart's strands of counterpoint, they also notice how much of the coursing first movement is marked *piano*. In the rapt *Andante*, the duo's fine-drawn *cantabile* lines are matched by their acute sensitivity to harmonic flux, above all in the way they 'feel' the speculative remote modulations in the central development. The players also find more variety in the little 'sonata for beginners', K547, than you might deduce from the printed page, without ever compromising the music's *faux naïf* grace.

Looking for problems, I'd point only to their reluctance, in each of the sonatas, to add even modest ornamentation, or improvise 'lead-ins' at fermatas. This cavil apart, Tiberghien and Ibragimova come close to my ideal Mozartian duo, in performances that further whet the appetite for the rest of the series.

Richard Wigmore

Prokofiev · Ravel · R Strauss

'Polychrome'

Prokofiev Violin Sonata No 2, Op 94a

Ravel Violin Sonata, 'Sonate posthume'

R Strauss Violin Sonata, Op 18

Tobias Feldmann *vn* **Boris Kusnezow** *pf*

Alpha © ALPHA253 (67' • DDD)



Tobias Feldmann and Boris Kusnezow make their debut on Alpha with this unusually

titled disc which, the 25-year-old German violinist explains, refers to the colours of the works involved: 'Strauss is more or less flaming red, Ravel more of a blue-green and Prokofiev is far more black and white.'

Their Prokofiev Second Sonata has many good things in it: they're alive to the changeability of the opening *Moderato* and their Scherzo has a dancing, darting quality, while the finale finds both players in their element, enjoying the sinewy nature of Prokofiev's writing, even if they have less clarity in its *Poco meno mosso* (track 5, 0'58") than the superb Ehnes and Armstrong. In the *Andante*, however, Feldmann's straightforward beauty is no match for Ibragimova, who conjures a sense of murky dread.

The ebullience of Strauss's early Violin Sonata clearly appeals greatly to the two players and Feldmann delights in its songful lines, Kusnezow dealing with the often treacherous piano-writing with aplomb, if occasionally a little too much

force in the louder passages. If as a whole Vilde Frang is tonally more varied and has in *Lifts* the most sensitive of pianists, Feldmann is particularly sweet-toned in the slow movement, where Tasmin Little sounds huskier. And the finale has some delightfully impish playing by both Feldmann and Kusnezow as they head towards the closing bars.

However, the Ravel doesn't quite convince. Feldmann coats it in a lustrous tone – just compare his opening phrases with those of Capuçon and Ibragimova, both of whom are more sparing with their vibrato. The latter has, in *Tiberghien*, a Ravellian of the first class and the way they breathe the lines together is highly evocative. Feldmann plays the sonata beautifully but it simply sounds too plushly Romantic (too red, not enough blue-green, perhaps). But, niggles aside, Feldmann is certainly an artist to watch. **Harriet Smith**

Prokofiev – selected comparisons:

Ehnes, Armstrong (10/13) (CHAN) CHAN10787

Ibragimova, Osborne (8/14) (HYPE) CDA67514

Ravel – selected comparisons:

R Capuçon, Bruley (5/02) (VIRG) 545492-2

Ibragimova, Tiberghien (A/11) (HYPE) CDA67820

Strauss – selected comparisons:

Frang, Liftis (5/11) (EMI) 947639-2

Little, Lane (2/13) (CHAN) CHAN10749

GRAMOPHONE *Collector*

WHEN THE WIND BLOWS

Andrew Farach-Colton lends an ear to a variety of woodwind recordings from clarinet to cor anglais



'Affectingly plangent': Michael Sieg and Angelika Merkle offer a disc of arrangements for cor anglais and piano

Franz Doppler and his younger brother Karl both had notable careers as conductors, opera composers and pedagogues but were particularly renowned for their virtuoso flute-playing. They toured Europe together for more than a decade and, like many performers of that era, composed their own showpieces – numerous potpourris of Hungarian melodies and fantasias on tunes from popular operas that still have allure for flautists and turn up regularly on recitals and recordings. With this Capriccio release, **Claudi Arimany** embarks on a survey of the Doppler brothers' complete flute music that will ultimately stretch to 10 discs. After listening to the 72 minutes' worth here, I can't say I'm impatient to hear the next volume,

though there's no question that Arimany and his various colleagues are ardent and accomplished advocates. There are a few delightful surprises – particularly the csárdás medley, which includes some of the same tunes Brahms would use in his *Hungarian Dances* a few years later. I also couldn't help but smile at the transformation of Gilda's 'Caro nome' into a Viennese-style waltz in the *Duo concertante on Themes from Verdi's 'Rigoletto'*.

Felix Draeseke and Franz Doppler probably knew one another through their connections to Liszt: Liszt entrusted the orchestration of his first six *Hungarian Rhapsodies* to Doppler, while Draeseke (14 years Doppler's junior) was Liszt's fervent follower and friend. Although Draeseke aligned himself with Liszt and

Wagner, the 'progressive' element is more evident in his symphonies than in his chamber music, which often seems closer in spirit to Schumann and Brahms – though Draeseke's approach to syntax and structure can be adventurous. The Quintet for horn, piano and strings, for instance, opens arrestingly with what sounds like a concluding cadence, as if the composer wanted to put punctuation at the beginning of a sentence. The syncopated scherzo is a delight, with passages that bring Borodin to mind, and the finale is chock-a-block full of lovely ideas; the tunes pour forth in a torrent. Two slow movements for horn and piano are Wagnerian in their feeling for expressive harmonic detail; but the prize is the Clarinet Sonata – or, at least, half of it. One might think Draeseke was inspired by Brahms's model, though in fact Draeseke's work was written some years earlier. The first two movements are drop-dead gorgeous, capitalising on the clarinet's ability to lay down a carpet of liquid velvet. If only the scherzo and finale were as melodically memorable and finely wrought. In any case, the performances here by pianist **Olivier Triendl**, clarinetist Pascal Moraguès and horn player Hervé Joulain make a passionate case for Draeseke's revival.

Cor anglais players would likely give their eye teeth for music as handsomely tailored and musically substantive as Draeseke's Clarinet Sonata, defects and all. A century or so ago, a virtuoso like **Michael Sieg** might have composed his own showpieces, but today the lines dividing composer and performer are more thickly drawn, so instead we get a mixed recital of arrangements. The art here is not only in the playing itself, which is affectingly plangent, but also in the choice of repertory and the juxtapositions. Who'd have guessed that Fauré and Piazzolla were so complementary, or how naturally Schulhoff's *Hot-Sonata*, originally for saxophone, works on the English horn? There are a few missteps: pianist Angelika Merkle's rhythmically fussy playing in Pasculli's arrangement of Amelia's aria from Act 2 of *Un ballo in maschera* sounds emotionally and stylistically far removed from Verdi, and Sieg's sangfroid in Rachmaninov's well-worn *Vocalise* makes one wonder why it's on the programme in the first place.

Irish clarinetist **John Finucane**'s disc is entitled 'French Holidays', which works well enough on paper but in practice sounds more like a working vacation. Poulenc's deliciously piquant Sonata is at once overdone and underplayed, full of pregnant breaths and pauses, yet oddly humourless. The slow movement is elegantly phrased, and Finucane's gleaming tone is mesmerising in its own right, yet the music's elegiac, elevating ache is conspicuously absent. Saint-Saëns's Sonata and Debussy's *Rhapsodie* are similarly strait-laced, although admirable in terms of articulateness and tonal delicacy. Gabriel Grovlez's slender but charming *Sarabande et Allegro* is the recital's unexpected high point. Finucane and pianist Elisaveta Blumina manage the music's teetering balance between cheerful and wistful to perfection.

But compare Finucane and Blumina's oddly subdued reading of Jean Françaix's Theme and Variations with clarinetist **Dimitri Ashkenazy** and pianist Yvonne Lang's effervescent account and, well, there's no comparison. In Ashkenazy and Lang's interpretation, this eight-minute romp becomes a dramatic tour de force and a perfect dessert for the main course: Françaix's Clarinet Concerto. The composer described the concerto as being like an aeronautics show, with loops, spins and 'frightening dives'. Other interpretations provide more thrills, perhaps, but none manages the rhythmic intricacies and metric shifts with such assurance and panache. The recording, originally made in 1995, is reissued here with a freshly minted and invigorating performance of a Françaix Trio for clarinet, viola and piano. **G**

THE RECORDINGS



F & K Doppler Cpte Flute Works, Vol 1
Claudi Arimani fl et al
Capriccio **Ⓢ** C5295



Draeseke Chamber Works
Oliver Triendl pf et al
TYXart **Ⓢ** TXA16077



Various Cpsrs 'Dialoge'
Michael Sieg cora **Angelika Merkle** pf
Genuin **Ⓢ** GEN17454



Various Cpsrs 'French Holidays'
John Finucane cl **Elisaveta Blumina** pf
Genuin **Ⓢ** GEN17451



Françaix Works for Clarinet
Dimitri Ashkenazy cl et al
Paladino **Ⓢ** PMR0074

Telemann

Fantasias - TWV33:1; TWV33:8; TWV40:10.
Sonatas - TWV41:C5; TWV41:d4; TWV41:F2;
TWV41:f1. Sonatinas - TWV41:a4; TWV41:c2

Genevieve Lacey recs **Jane Gower** bn

Lars Ulrik Mortensen hpd

ABC Classics **Ⓢ** ABC481 4568 (65' • DDD)



Just when you thought there might be a break in these pages from 2016's

steady flow of recordings marking Telemann's 250th anniversary year, up pops another one. This was in fact released at the end of last year, and features a fine trio of Baroque players: the Australian recorder player Genevieve Lacey; fellow Australian bassoonist Jane Gower, who plays principal bassoon with period ensembles such as John Eliot Gardiner's English Baroque Soloists and Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique; and harpsichordist Lars Ulrik Mortensen, whose own titles include musical director of the European Union Baroque Orchestra and artistic director of Concerto Copenhagen.

I wish I hadn't read the booklet-notes until much further into my listening relationship with this recording, because they're a rather rum affair, more guaranteed to bemuse than tempt, with no musical or programming explanation. This is a shame, because there's some lovely, natural playing across this constantly changing programme of different instrumental combinations. Unsurprisingly, the instruments are all Baroque copies; particularly worth knowing is that Mortensen's double harpsichord is after a model by Ruckers, the 18th-century Flemish kings of harpsichord manufacturing, and it is as resonant and crisp as one would expect. Also, Lacey's choice for the solo Fantasia in E major, TWV40:10, is a maple voice flute (an instrument sitting between the alto and tenor recorder sizes), and the combination of this size and soft wood makes for a perfect tonal complement to her gentle reading.

While I wouldn't say that I found any epiphanies here, it's all very elegant and thoughtful. So if you're after some wind-shaped Telemann chamber music, then go for it. **Charlotte Gardner**

'Sonate e Canzoni'

Anonymous Viel trawren in meinen hertzen
Farina Canzon detta la Bolognesa. Canzon detta la Marina. Sonata detta la Desperata. Sonata detta la Farina. Sonata detta la Fiamma. Sonata detta la Franzosina **Frantz** Fantasia Frantz

Melli II Ciarlino Capriccio Chromatico **Nau**

Fantasia **Steffan Nau** **M Rossi** Toccatas - IV; VII

Leila Schayegh vn **Jonathan Pesek** vc/va da gamba

Jörg Halubek hpd/org **Daniele Caminiti** archlute

Pan Classics **Ⓢ** PC10368 (65' • DDD)



I confess my eyes lit up at the sight of this release from Leila Schayegh, the Swiss

violinist whose version of the Bach violin-and-harpsichord sonatas last year (Glossa, 3/15) shot straight into the play-off places among my favourite recordings of those wondrous works. How can one not look forward to hearing her bright warm tone, smooth technique and excellent good taste in the violin repertoire of early-17th-century Italy, with its appealing mix of lyrical sweetness and restless virtuosity?

Carlo Farina was among the first composers to write specifically for the violin, playing a major part as he did so in developing such techniques as double-stopping, tremolo and *col legno*. His most famous piece, the four-part *Capriccio stravagante*, makes use of these for programmatic purposes, but although they do not feature so strongly in the music presented here – the complete works for solo violin and continuo drawn from Farina's total of 128 assorted instrumental pieces – there is no doubt that the sonatas, at least, are real violin music. And if it's no use pretending that in their sometimes rambling progress they are as formally satisfying as the sonatas produced around that time by contemporaries such as Marini, Fontana, Buonamente and Salomone Rossi, they exude the same alluring ambience.

In any case, the disc addresses the threat of monotony by interspersing Farina's pieces with solos for harpsichord, lute and gamba by composers known, little-known and unknown (sometimes using them to good effect as preludes to a Farina piece), as well as two rare early works for unaccompanied violin. I am pleased to say that I was not disappointed by Schayegh's performances of these largely neglected pieces, or with that of her excellent fellow musicians. Technically flawless, effortlessly stylish and with one of the most seductive sounds of any Baroque violinist today, Schayegh is one to watch out for whatever the repertoire. **Lindsay Kemp**

Find your
music on
www.qobuz.com

qobuz

Dinu Lipatti

Bryce Morrison pays tribute to the ‘transcendental’ Romanian pianist who touched the lives of many through his playing but whose own life was tragically cut short by illness

Was ever a pianist or (more inclusively) musician more garlanded with praise than Dinu Lipatti? Yehudi Menuhin spoke of him as ‘a manifestation of a spiritual realm, resistant to all pain and suffering’. Cortot considered his playing ‘perfection’, while his ‘musical guide and spiritual mother’ Nadia Boulanger remained haunted by his ‘serene face’ and ‘velvety’ eyes and the way that his very being radiated musical clarity. Poulenc, too, spoke of an ‘artist of divine spirituality’, and Clara Haskil (his ‘dear Clarinette’) once wrote to him: ‘How I envy your talent. The devil take it. Why must you have so much talent and I so little? Is this justice on earth?’

Such eulogy is far from hyperbole, even when it led to reminders such as ‘those whom the gods love die young’ or to a comparison with Malory’s Sir Galahad, who alone was granted a vision of the Holy Grail before his death.

Yet Lipatti – modest and self-effacing (though with a no less strong sense of his stature) – would have shrugged aside such (for him) undeserved halos. He saw himself as a vessel through which could pass a musical truth, and the manifestation of this simple ideal is burningly clear throughout his tragically brief discography – in the words of TS Eliot, a ‘communication of the dead tongued with fire beyond the language of the living’.

Inevitably, the circumstances of Lipatti’s life and career tempt an emotional bias that can cloud critical perspective. Yet the passing of time has swept aside such considerations, and his stature has increased rather than diminished with the years. At the same time, questions are asked. Denis Matthews, who greatly admired Lipatti, wondered whether such a loving regard rather than neurotic pursuit of an ever elusive perfection could end up sounding overworked – the reverse, for example, of Alfred Cortot’s freedom, or his advice to his students: ‘Improvise, lose yourself?’

Turning to the legendary Besançon recital recorded in September 1950, less than

three months before his death (and which his wife, the pianist Madeleine Cantacuzino, felt to be an ultimate Calvary), you hear clarity and strength of purpose remaining miraculously intact – it’s an astonishing example of mind, or spirit, over matter. Yet if the strain of the occasion (memorably captured in Paul Bailey’s novel *Uncle Rudolf*; Fourth Estate: 2003) tells, for instance in an almost strict-tempo view of Chopin’s Waltz in A flat, Op 64 No 3, or in an edge suggesting an awareness of ‘time’s wingèd chariot hurrying near’ (to quote Andrew Marvell), that touch of severity is erased at the end of a recital at once bitter and triumphant.

Lipatti’s greatness in Chopin (one where ‘stylistic purity and divine intuition combine’ –

Robert Aguetant) is best appreciated in his studio recording of the 14 waltzes and most of all in the Third Sonata and the Barcarolle. In the sonata’s opening *Allegro maestoso* everything is kept characteristically on the move, the reverse, for example, of Emil Gilels’s broadly inflected reading. How the second subject (among the most ravishing in all Chopin) radiates! In common with Arthur Rubinstein, yet inimitably himself, Lipatti is among the great singers of the keyboard. Everything is outwardly direct yet filled with barely perceptible

colours, nuances and inflections. There is neither Cortot’s (admittedly beguiling) fun and fancy-free approach nor Argerich’s occasional hysteria (in her live recording) to impede a matchless blend of musical grace and strength. In the Barcarolle, too, poise and regality combine in the harmonically tortuous, near Wagnerian descent before the miraculous close.

Again, and moving far ahead into the music of another century, who but Lipatti could make his entry in the slow movement of Bartók’s Third Concerto such an evocation of both the composer’s *religioso* direction and the *puszta* (the great spaces of the Hungarian plains)? Here, too, is a reminder of the wealth of Lipatti’s repertoire (small in

He saw himself as a vessel through which could pass a musical truth

DEFINING MOMENTS

• 1928–32 – *Conservatoire student from age 11*

Studies at the Bucharest Conservatoire with Florica Musicescu, who also taught fellow Romanians Radu Lupu and Mîndru Katz.

• 1933 – *Causes a stir*

Wins second prize at the Vienna International Competition, causing Alfred Cortot to resign from the jury in protest at Lipatti’s failure to be awarded the first prize.

• 1934–39 – *Studies in Paris*

Studies the piano with Cortot and Yvonne Lefébure, and composition with Paul Dukas and Nadia Boulanger.

• 1939 – *Paris debut*

Official Paris debut recital at the Salle Pleyel.

• 1943 – *Cancer diagnosis*

Diagnosed with Hodgkin’s disease – or lymphogranulomatosis, which he struggled half-painfully, half-humorously to spell.

• 1944–49 – *In Switzerland*

Professorship at the Geneva Conservatoire.

• 1947 – *Gets married*

Marries the pianist Madeleine Cantacuzino.

• 1950 – *Swansong*

The Besançon recital took place on September 16, less than three months before his death on December 2.



public but large in private). Ranging widely, it included early Fauré, Schubert's Sonata in B flat, selections from Albéniz's *Iberia*, Falla's *Ritual Fire Dance* and, when he was caught in a mischievous mood, a wild arrangement of Arlen and Koehler's 'Stormy Weather'. Liszt, too, features prominently, and Lipatti's formidable power and articulation in the First Concerto erased conductor Willem Mengelberg's initial view of an outwardly frail figure ('that's no Liszt pianist'). This can be heard (conducted by Ansermet) on the invaluable 'Les inedites' box – diamond clippings from the master's workshop which retain their glitter however dimly recorded. You can almost hear Lipatti's disapproval of live performances never intended for publication. Yet how grateful one is for those audacious hallucinatory performances of two Brahms intermezzos, a superb reading of Liszt's *Gnomenreigen* (devoid of, say, Georges Cziffra's explosive whimsy) and a deeply affectionate rendition with his beloved playing partner the cellist Antonio Janigro of Fauré's 'Après un rêve'.

A whole CD devoted to Lipatti the composer (recorded by Luiza Borac;

1/13) shows the often light-hearted influence of his French training with Boulanger, Cortot and Yvonne Lefébure, a Gallic *style classique* with playful echoes of Françaix.

The Schumann Piano Concerto, whether heard in the studio with Herbert von Karajan or live with Ernest Ansermet, was always among Lipatti's trump cards, with Karajan's version a robust rebuttal to those who long to turn Schumann into Ivor Novello. However, Lipatti's relationship with Karajan was uneasy. Offended by the conductor's dictatorial manner, he offered to conduct while Karajan played the solo part. Lipatti could be strong-minded when required, a quality reflected in all his recordings and never more so than in the Schumann.

But I have merely touched on the qualities that made up this truly transcendental musician. Lipatti was, above all,

a pianist who, in Charles Rosen's words, appeared to do little, but ended by doing everything. This he had in common with, say, Solomon and Haskil, though he exceeded both in stature. Blessed with a unique sense of the 'inscape' of a composer, he makes you sense with unimpeded clarity the very heart and essence of a composer's vision. Deferential to the last, he may have echoed Fauré's words, 'I have done what I could...and so, judge, my God.' **G**

THE ESSENTIAL RECORDING



Chopin Piano Sonata No 3 in B minor

Dinu Lipatti *pf*

EMI/Warner Classics (5/47, 11/05)

Choice amid such treasure is challenging to say the least.

But if forced to elect that final desert island disc it would

have to be Chopin's Third Sonata, played by Lipatti with a matchless brilliance and refinement.

Instrumental



Jed Distler enjoys Liszt's pianistic take on Beethoven's Eroica:

'It takes a pianist of Baldocchi's formidable capabilities to bring off his unorthodox ideas, whether or not one agrees' ► [REVIEW ON PAGE 77](#)



Stephen Plaistow hears Piotr Anderszewski's latest album:

'Schumann managed the last of the "Ghost" Variations in 1854, after being pulled from the Rhine' ► [REVIEW ON PAGE 83](#)

JS Bach

Goldberg Variations, BWV988

Beatrice Rana *pf*

Warner Classics © 9029 58801-8 (78' • DDD)



Beatrice Rana has been making waves since her teens, notably at the 2013 Van Cliburn

competition, where she won Silver Medal. Even so, is it really wise to record the *Goldbergs* at 23? How can you possibly have lived enough to have a sufficiently profound take on this Olympian work? Even Igor Levit waited until he was in his late twenties for what was to become *Gramophone's* Record of the Year. Yet Gould made his famous 1955 studio recording for his CBS debut before his 23rd birthday; and Julia Fischer set down Bach's Solo Violin Sonatas and Partitas at just 21. Levit, Gould, Fischer – these are Bachians of major note. But Rana patently deserves to be numbered among them, and this is a remarkable document, from her thought-provoking, highly intelligent yet modest booklet-note to the playing itself.

As you listen to her way with the opening Aria, you might initially wonder whether the freedom and quasi-improvisatory air might become, on repeated listenings, too fixed – unnerving, like the Cheshire Cat's smile. She takes her time, too; and then, with Variation 1, we're thrust suddenly into a different world, one of bubbling energy and sunlight. Her detailing is one of the aspects that makes this performance so compelling, be it the bringing out of a new line in the repeat, subtle changes in phrasing, a touch of pedal – examples are to be found in every single variation. Dynamics are used to reinforce the mini-drama of a single number (sample, for instance, Var 19, which starts at a whisper, crescendoing up to the double bar). Her application of ornaments is also wonderfully fresh, though 'application' gives completely the wrong impression,

as the effect is unfailingly organic and ranges from the sublime to the cheeky.

The variations that in some hands become merely strong and affirmative are beguilingly multi-layered (for instance Var 4, which moves from a strutting opening to something altogether more inward). Gentler numbers benefit from Rana's ability to conjure the most translucent of textures to give us, in Var 7, a heartbreakingly wistful Gigue, while she emphasises the halting quality of Var 15 to end the first half of the *Goldbergs* in a state of profound unease – a mood dramatically broken by the grandiloquent entry of the French Overture.

In the famous so-called 'Black Pearl' (Var 25) she allows Bach's tortured dissonances to speak for themselves rather than piling on a Romantic angst, the tension finally released by the joyously airborne Var 26. In some hands, these last variations, which build on that sense of joy, can seem rather forced (as Jeremy Denk once quipped, 'each more ecstatic than the last: how much happier am I supposed to get?'). Not here, though, where they range from the bucolic to the transcendental. After a Quodlibet that rejoices in its simple good humour, the return of the Aria is as emotionally multifaceted as you would expect – mysterious, quizzical, noble, resigned, hopeful – setting the seal on a life-affirming disc. **Harriet Smith**

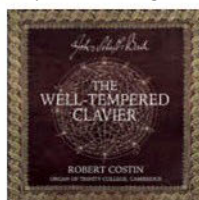
JS Bach

Das wohltemperirte Clavier, BWV846-893

Robert Costin *org*

Stone Records © ④ 5060192 780697 (ST8069) (4h 40' • DDD)

Played on the organ of Trinity College, Cambridge



This project has clearly been a labour of love for Robert Costin, and one admires his consistently excellent playing. Any new recording of the '48' for solo organ is to be welcomed, especially with

an outstanding instrument. The three-manual, 42-stop Metzler organ of Trinity College, Cambridge, is magnificent; combining it with the chapel's warm but clear acoustic provides the ideal venue for this repertoire.

Costin's performances could be described as straightforward, with mostly well-chosen tempos and neat articulation, well suited to the organ. There's just some inconsistency in the phrasing of fugue subjects, where notes that are detached in the opening statement become legato later on. Some of the syncopations are understated in their articulation, and Costin only occasionally adds his own ornaments to the printed decorations. Speeds are never too fast but some tempos feel rather solemn and measured, particularly in Book 2. This is partly a result of the acoustical and mechanical properties of the organ; but the slower pace can prove beneficial to clarity.

However, in some of the louder fugues where Costin uses an 'organo pleno' *tutti*, there's some loss of clarity, with Bach's counterpoint sounding somewhat congested. Also, a few of the fugues have changes of manuals, and some might ask whether this enhances the music at all. (It does in Book 2's G sharp minor fugue, which uses two themes.) Another aspect that might disturb listeners is the big dynamic gap between quiet, serene preludes and loud, bold and majestic fugues. Meanwhile, in the softer preludes which use the beautiful, delicate flute stops, the bass register is too weak to support the harmony.

Nevertheless, there are some wonderful colours on these CDs: the Vox Humana in Book 1's E major Prelude and the Dulcian in Book 1's B minor Prelude are delightful. Equally enjoyable is the telling use of the Pedal Posaune towards the end of some of the Book 2 fugues. Overall, then, despite some reservations, listening to these CDs has been an invigorating and stimulating experience. Above all, we can rejoice again in the glorious music springing from Bach's compositional genius. **Christopher Nickol**



'Life-affirming': still in her mid-20s, Beatrice Rana joins the ranks of masterful Bachians

Beethoven

'Liszt-Beethoven Complete Symphonies, Vol 2'

Beethoven/Liszt Symphony No 3, 'Eroica', Op 55 (S464 No 3) **Beethoven** Bagatelles, Op 126

Gabriele Baldocchi *pf*

Dynamic © CDS7771 (72' • DDD)



While Liszt's solo piano arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies frequently and impressively conjure up orchestral grandeur, the piano-writing is idiomatic and finger-friendly, at least to those accomplished enough to master its challenges. With that in mind, Gabriele Baldocchi treats the Beethoven/Liszt *Eroica* as a symphony for piano and pianist. From the broadening introductory chords onwards, the pianist inflects his brisk first-movement tempo with rhetorical adjustments that few contemporary conductors would fathom yet which manage to sound fluidly organic. Big chords representing massive orchestral *tutti*s constantly vary in weight and voicing, while careful contouring of inner voices and secondary contrapuntal lines helps move things along.

The Funeral March is no less remarkable in Baldocchi's hands. He unfolds the main theme with the subtlest rubato that allows bass-lines to take meaningful shape, while well-differentiated legato and detached phrasing lend further textural interest and distinction. While Baldocchi's acceleration in the fughetta arguably softens the music's devastating build, it admittedly makes pianistic sense. Although I've heard lighter, more pointed articulation of the Scherzo's steady staccato chords (Scherbakov and Katsaris, for example), Baldocchi compensates by bringing out all of the composer's cross-rhythmic phrases and accentuations. Both pianistically and musically, each of the finale's variations conveys a distinct yet related character; unity through diversity, in other words.

Given Baldocchi's piano-centric orientation in the *Eroica*, it's ironic that he should approach the intimately scaled Op 126 Bagatelles from a relatively orchestral vantage point. Nos 1 and 3 proceed with the austere deliberation of late-period Klemperer, and No 2's combative contrasts reveal little charm. Baldocchi extends the grim energy he

brings to No 4's outer sections to the major-key central episode, which most pianists view as a place of lyrical respite. A tinge of warmth begins to seep through the last two bagatelles, but only a tinge. Needless to say, it takes a pianist of Baldocchi's formidable capabilities to bring off his unorthodox ideas, whether or not one agrees with them. Yet there's much to agree with and to savour throughout an absorbing *Eroica* that bodes well for this Beethoven/Liszt cycle's subsequent instalments. **Jed Distler**

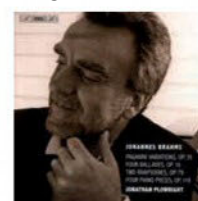
Brahms

'The Complete Solo Piano Music, Vol 4'

Four Ballades, Op 10. Four Piano Pieces, Op 119. Two Rhapsodies, Op 79. Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op 35

Jonathan Plowright *pf*

BIS © BIS2137 (82' • DDD/DSD)



As we reach Volume 4 of this complete solo Brahms traversal, there's no doubt that Jonathan Plowright and old Johannes are on the best of terms. The programming of

works from different stages in Brahms's career points up the way earlier pieces can foreshadow his late style. Take the Op 10 Ballades, for example: the First has a rare inwardness that links it to Op 119. Sokolov may be more overtly reactive here but Plowright is no less telling – which is saying something! I like very much too the speed at which he takes the outer sections of the Second Ballade, avoiding sounding ponderous. In fact tempos are often on the quick side – as witness the second of the two Op 79 Rhapsodies – faster than Perahia, whose reading I much admire. Following this with Op 119 is a masterstroke, the first piece almost shocking in its introversion. Plowright is the equal of the very fine Vogt here, while in the third piece there's a lightness of spirit, akin to that of Perahia's, both of whom observe its *Grazioso e giocoso* marking to greater effect than Angelich.

The disc is bookended by the two volumes of *Paganini Variations*. Even Brahms's most strenuous technical demands hold no fears, the abundant thirds and sixths of Vars 1 and 2 (Book 1) given with an almost airy ease. But more telling still is the sense of playfulness that Plowright brings not only to the theme itself but to myriad variations, which means that the points of stillness (Book 1, Vars 11 & 12) have a truly transcendental air. Plowright is very much the equal of Ohlsson, technically, and more imaginative still in the quieter music. He also has the benefit of superb sound from BIS and a piano that is clearly in tip-top condition.

Harriet Smith

Op 10 – selected comparison:

Sokolov (OP11) OP30366

Opp 79 & 119 – selected comparison:

Perahia (2/11) (SONY) 88697 72725-2

Op 119 – selected comparisons:

Vogt (5/92%) (EMI) 557543-2

Angelich (4/07) (VIRG) 379302-2

Op 35 – selected comparison:

Ohlsson (11/10) (HYPER) CDA67777

► See The Musician and the Score on page 64

Chopin

Piano Sonata No 2, Op 35. Preludes, Op 28

Julien Brocal *pf*

Rubicon © RCD1001 (65' • DDD)



Julien Brocal's recordings of Chopin's Op 28 Preludes and Op 35 Sonata reveal a sensitive and talented pianist before us, although, interpretatively speaking, he's a 'work in progress'. One liability concerns

his way with dynamics, which never go beyond *mezzo-piano* and *mezzo-forte* in many of the Preludes. Conversely, when Brocal does let loose with *fortissimos* (as in Nos 18 and 24) he has trouble getting softer when necessary. In addition, some of the more difficult Preludes, for example Nos 8, 16 and 19, find Brocal letting the right hand assume the balance of power, with the left hand more or less parked in neutral, so to speak.

He misjudges No 9's climaxes, brings a less than decisive rhythmic profile to No 12's *agitato* phrases and adds a predictable *luffpause* to the end of each phrase in No 7. No 2 is emphatically heavy-handed, while No 3's quicksilver left-hand runs are accurate but not particularly supple or effortless. To be sure, Brocal scores high dramatic points in No 22, while his fluent and well-proportioned phrasing in the 'Raindrop' Prelude (No 15) keeps the music alive and afloat. Yet, on the whole, Brocal is not about to displace Schmitt-Leonardy, Sokolov, Tharaud, Trifonov, Budu and Zhang, among recent contenders, let alone Argerich, Moravec and Ashkenazy.

Overly loud playing prevails throughout the Sonata's first movement, although Brocal stokes the development section's disquiet with some arresting rubatos. At first the Scherzo's Trio seems slow and square, yet you soon notice the pianist's fine sense of long-lined control, which continues over into the Funeral March. The 'wind through the graveyard' finale's *sotto voce* unison lines are securely dispatched, complete with an appropriately whiplash conclusion. The interpretation sounds less imaginative and interesting when measured alongside Grimaud, Hamelin, Pogorelich, Argerich, Gilels or the first Pollini version, yet it works perfectly well within its own parameters. For all of its undeniable potential, Brocal's Chopin faces the inevitable reality of an extensive catalogue of superior competing versions of these oft-recorded works. **Jed Distler**

Chopin

Four Ballades. Fantaisie, Op 49.

Piano Sonata No 2, Op 35

Angela Brownridge *pf*

Challenge Classics © CC72728

(67' • DDD/DSD)



Angela Brownridge's robust and colourful pianism will quickly quash anyone's mental

image of Chopin as weak and tubercular. However, like certain artists who think big, who favour bold primary colours over dainty pastels, Brownridge can be cavalier with details. All of the notes are there, to be sure, yet her handling of dynamics, accents and transitions is hit and miss. In the Second Sonata's opening *Allegro*, for example, Brownridge never plays softly enough, while the second subject loses its individual character when executed in such a strict and unyielding fashion. A heavy touch permeates the Scherzo and there's little sense of long line due to the Trio's accented left-hand up-beats. By contrast, the Funeral March is beautifully sustained and shaped. The enigmatic finale's two-handed unison writing unfolds in an uneventful, foursquare manner, abetted by a conservative tempo that ever so slightly slows down as it progresses.

The First Ballade betrays signs of impatience; notice, for instance, how Brownridge nearly always makes a tiny acceleration on the main motif's final notes, and that she often builds climaxes before the climaxes actually occur. Still, her strongly independent left hand brings out linear movement other pianists ignore. She brings singing mobility to the Second Ballade's chorale-like soft sections and a full-bodied approach to the *agitato* writing that never lapses into toneless banging. Some of the pianist's dynamic inflections and her headlong momentum impart an unsettling, nervous edge to the Third Ballade's graceful lilt. Her accelerations in the Fourth Ballade's introduction anticipate the fidgety pacing, telegraphed *crescendos* and misjudged dynamic dosages up ahead, although the treacherous coda is rendered with powerful clarity.

Brownridge brings appropriate passion and fervency to the F minor Fantasy's long stretches of virtuosic passagework, yet her quieter playing lacks the simplicity heard in her earlier recording of this work (Cameo Classics). Challenge Classics' engineering reflects a realistic concert-hall ambience, and *Gramophone's* Bryce Morrison provides vivid, informative annotations. **Jed Distler**

Czerny

Prelude and Fugue, Op 607.

Twenty Short Voluntaries, Op 698.

Twelve Introductory or Intermediate Voluntaries, Op 627

Iain Quinn *org*

Naxos © M 573425 (75' • DDD)

Played on the organ of Miller Chapel, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ



'Sensitive and scrupulous': Momo Kodama bridges cultural influences in meshing *Études* by Debussy and Toshio Hosokawa



Poor Carl Czerny! Despite his pivotal position, being both a pupil of Beethoven

and a teacher of Liszt, his reputation as a composer rests almost entirely on the multitude of taxing exercises and studies that are still the backbone of most serious pianists' training. They are just a part of a vast oeuvre of 861 opus numbers he churned out. His music has always polarised critical opinion: Robert Schumann lambasted his 'failure of invention', while the first of Debussy's 12 piano *Études* is a homage to Czerny, and Stravinsky appreciated the 'full-blooded musician in him'.

His organ music was hitherto completely unknown to me. This appears to be its first commercial recording. Following a visit to England in 1837 (which included a performance at Kensington Palace for the future Queen Victoria), Czerny struck a deal with the English music publisher Robert Cocks, who took the collections of Voluntaries included here. The longest lasts three and a half minutes, the shortest just 29 seconds. For the most part they

have a certain bland charm, being riddled with sequences and a fondness for diminished sevenths in their closing bars. They lack Mendelssohn's comparable lightness of touch, variety of textures and – frankly – sheer melodic memorability. The strongest work on the disc is undoubtedly the opening Prelude and Fugue in A minor, an academically perfect piece of ersatz Bach with its double fugal subject, which is worked out with flawless counterpoint.

Iain Quinn lavishes his customary fastidious care on these trifles which, I fear, will be mostly of interest to completists.

Malcolm Riley

Debussy · Hosokawa

'Point and Line'

Debussy *Études* Hosokawa *Études I-VI*

Momo Kodama *pf*

ECM New Series © 481 4738 (79' • DDD)



As with her 2013 ECM solo debut (1/14), Momo Kodama's follow-up for the label aims to bridge cross-cultural influences between East and West, in Debussy's 12 *Études* and six by Toshio

Hosokawa. While Kodama's mixing and matching of selections eliminates the careful contrasts and cumulative fulfilment of Debussy's original running order, it allows one to absorb Hosokawa's sparse and sometimes static musical language in appreciably small doses.

Kodama lavishes plenty of sensitivity and scrupulous detail upon Hosokawa's *Études*, probably more than these skilful yet derivative works warrant. The title-track, 'Point and Line', features (you guessed it) pointillistic phrases and long sustained lines, sometimes with lots of space in between gestures, while sometimes piling upon each other. Kodama's tonal shading of the jagged detached notes and carefully calibrated dynamics vivify the piano-writing tenfold. One might uncharitably describe the slow-moving 'Melody' as 'Takemitsu on Quaaludes', yet Kodama's pellucid touch and subtle chord voicings save the day. She structures fitful, petulant outbursts of 'Anger' so that they dynamically cohere, and without a trace of banging.

Kodama's readings of Debussy's far more musically substantial and complex *Études* face strong competition. Her soft-grained 'Pour les cinq doigts' lacks Bavouzet's lightness and sparkle (Chandos,

12/08), and she falls into the common trap of rushing the right-hand triplets at bars 12 and 14. 'Pour les degrés chromatiques', 'Pour les huit doigts' and the double-note études are well contoured, albeit without the crisp and angular profile of Uchida (Decca, 7/90) or Ju-Ying Song (ProPiano). Kodama projects No 11's tenderness but not its sly humour, while No 12's mysterious central section dies in suspended animation. However, Kodama's understated yet fluent traversal of No 10 lets this music's overlooked emotional depth speak for itself. ECM's engineering is up to the label's state-of-the-art standard.
Jed Distler

Glass

Études – selection. Glassworks – Opening

Víkingur Ólafsson *pf* with Síggi Quartet
DG ④ 479 6918GH (80' • DDD)



In 2015, when Glass's complete set of 20 *Études* for solo piano were presented – tag-team-style – by five different pianists (including the composer himself) at London's Barbican Centre, the Icelandic pianist Víkingur Ólafsson's performances stood out for their rare combination of sheer technical brilliance, expressive control and interpretative depth. As Ivan Hewett pointed out at the time, hearing Ólafsson playing these études was 'like listening to a true masterpiece'. Several impressive recordings of Glass's *Études* – 10 of which are presented here – already exist by Glass luminaries including Maki Namekawa, Paul Barnes (both on Orange Mountain) and Bruce Levingston (Sono Luminus), but Ólafsson's interpretations inhabit a unique, distinct and extraordinary world all their own.

It is tempting to draw comparison with Glenn Gould here. Like Gould, Ólafsson possesses that rare gift of illuminating a familiar work in unexpected ways, revealing hidden depths and drawing out its best qualities. In Glass's music, each repetition is enriched by subtle changes in colour, voice-leading and articulation, as if Ólafsson were continually refreshing the page on his musical server.

In the 'Opening' from *Glassworks*, another pianist might have been content simply to execute twos against threes with clock-like precision. Ólafsson goes much further, drawing to the surface with every cycle each of the four lines latent in the piano's texture. At other times Ólafsson adjusts both tone and expression from

one repeated module to the next, such as in the one-bar variations of the quirky *Étude* No 14. Like Gould, there are idiosyncrasies here, and at times interpretative decisions that fly in the face of the printed score. But when the musical results are as overwhelmingly positive and impressive as they are here, then one can forgive occasional artistic leeway.

The superb Síggi Quartet join Ólafsson on two tracks in Christian Badzura's creative re-imaginings of *Étude* No 2 and 'Opening' (the second of two versions recorded here), suggesting further pathways for future exploration by this breathtakingly brilliant pianist.

Pwyll ap Siôn

Glinka

'Complete Piano Works, Vol 1 – Variations'

Variations – on a Original Theme; on a Theme from the Opera 'Faniska' by Cherubini; on Two Themes from the Ballet 'Chao-Kang'; on a Theme from 'Die Zauberflöte' by Mozart; on the Romance 'Banetta sia la madre'; on the Russian Folksong 'Sredi doliny rovnyya' (In the shallow valley); on a Theme from the Opera 'I Capuleti e i Montecchi' by Bellini; on the Song 'The Nightingale' by Alexandr Alyabyev. *Variazioni brillanti* on a Theme from the Opera 'Anna Bolena' by Donizetti

Inga Fiolia *pf*

Grand Piano ④ GP741 (77' • DDD)



Tchaikovsky's judgement that Glinka was the acorn from which the oak of Russian music grew rests on the orchestral *Kamarinskaya* rather than his piano music, but these sets of variations are at least interesting in that they identify the composers who were the catalyst in exciting Glinka's passion for music in the first place. Such sets of keyboard variations were nothing new in Russia: they go right back to the 18th century. But Glinka knew his Field, Hummel and Henselt, and he contributed something new in the manner of their swagger and colour to the sort of Russian piano music that was designed to titillate elegant salons.

In this first volume of a projected series of Glinka's piano music the Georgian-born pianist Inga Fiolia has the right sort of perky spirit, charm and deftness of technique to give some idea of how those salons might have swooned and sighed in admiration at Glinka's gifts. But whether their reaction would have been the same if they had had to listen to all the sets of variations in one go is a moot point. The

most ambitious (and among the longest) are the variations on themes from Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* and Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*, the latter triggered by Glinka's attendance at the opera's Milan premiere in 1830, when he 'wallowed in rapture'. However, for all the tinselled titivation of Glinka's piano-writing, it is hard to view these variations as much more than youthful *jeux d'esprits* – until, that is, the variations on Alyabyev's song 'The Nightingale' of 1833 which, in its Russian inflection, might justifiably be considered to have acorn status. **Geoffrey Norris**

Leighton

'Complete Organ Works'

Stephen Farr *org* with Nicky Spence *ten*

Chloë Hanslip *vn* John Butt *org*

Resonus ④ RES10178 (3h 28' • DDD)

Played on the organs of St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, Symphony Hall, Birmingham, and St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge
Disc 1 from RES10134 (A/14)



The first disc in this three-disc set was released separately in 2014 and I reviewed it in these pages. I liked it a lot, and suggested that the Rieger organ of Edinburgh's St Giles' Cathedral helped clarify Leighton's 'dry and acerbic chromaticisms'. Hearing it again only serves to reinforce that opinion. However, newer recordings of the same instrument elsewhere in this set are mellower and generously enhance the sound of *Paeon* and *Fanfare*, two short works by which many organists first came to experience Leighton's distinctive sound world.

Stephen Farr presents a particularly fine performance of Leighton's earliest organ work, the *Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia*, and a tremendously compelling account of *Et resurrexit*. These are included on the second disc, which was recorded on another remarkably bright-toned instrument, the Klais of Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Here, again, the recordings are exceptional both for the clarity of detail and for the immediacy of the sound.

The set goes a little beyond its brief in including three intriguing ensemble works which involve the organ. *Martyrs* finds Farr and John Butt joining forces in an organ duet, while Nicky Spence partners Farr for *These Are Thy Wonders*, a rare work for tenor voice and organ (off the top of my head the only other one I know is Flor Peeters's *Ubi caritas*). Spence's bright, clear,

New Releases

TRAVELLING LIGHT: THE MUSIC OF JIM PARKER

SOLEM QUARTET, et al



Jim Parker is the composer of music for many UK TV series, including Midsomer Murders, House of Cards and Foyle's War. This, his 'pure' music for chamber ensemble, shows a wonderful gift for melodic, lyrical and thoroughly tonal music in the English light music tradition.
Divine Art dda 25146

MIND MUSIC (CHARITY BENEFIT CD)

ELIZABETH JORDAN | LYNSEY MARSH | NORTHERN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA, STEPHEN BARLOW, CONDUCTOR



Works for clarinet and chamber orchestra by Richard Strauss, Mendelssohn, John Adams and Kevin Malone, to benefit Parkinson's UK.
Divine Art dda 25138



ANDREAS WILLSCHER: ORGAN SYMPHONY NO.5

CARSON COOMAN



The striking and exceptionally moving Fifth Symphony of Andreas Willscher, inspired by St. Francis of Assisi and subtitled "Of Francis's Preaching on Holy Poverty"
Divine Art dda 25150

THE DIANA BOYLE EDITION *intangible classics series*

(digital download and streaming only)

BRAHMS: KLAVIERSTÜCKE (zda 50501)

BEETHOVEN: DIABELLI VARIATIONS (zda 50502)

J.S. BACH: THE GOLDBERG VARIATIONS (zda 50503)

J.S. BACH: THE SIX KEYBOARD PARTITAS (zda 50601)

Follow us on Facebook, SoundCloud, Twitter and YouTube
Available at all good dealers in both CD and download format
and direct from

www.divineartrecords.com

Distribution in the UK by



Worldwide distribution by



"... her playing is vibrant, daring, intellectually curious and continuously evolving..."

-Ottawa Citizen (2016)

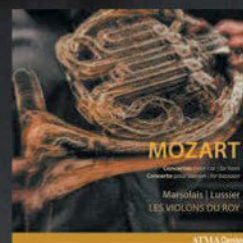


AVAILABLE FROM
APRIL 14, 2017

ACD2 2728

JANINA FIALKOWSKA WILL BE IN CONCERT
AT THE WIGMORE HALL, LONDON,
APRIL 25, 2017

ATMA CLASSIQUE'S LATEST RELEASES



DISTRIBUTED IN THE UK AND IRELAND
BY PROPER MUSIC DISTRIBUTION

ATMA Classique

almost bell-like tenor is so well matched to the Birmingham Klais that it sounds almost like another organ stop.

The third ensemble piece continues a fine tradition of music for organ and violin (think Rheinberger, Karg-Elert and Dupré). The deeply sensuous tone of Chloë Hanslip combined with the warm and luscious sound of the Willis in St Paul's, Knightsbridge, is so captivating that one wonders why the *Fantasy on Es ist genug* has not established a firmer foothold in the repertoire.

The only disappointments are the six short Improvisations for harpsichord. Adam Binks in his outstanding booklet-note suggests that these were written when the composer was experiencing a period of 'stress and upheaval'. It makes for some uncomfortable listening, not helped by a rather harsh-sounding instrument. It might have pushed timing to the limit but how welcome a new recording of the Organ Concerto would have been instead. Splendid as the John Scott/Richard Hickox performance is (Chandos, 7/08), there is always room for one more, especially from so perceptive an interpreter of Leighton's music as Stephen Farr reveals himself to be.

Marc Rochester

Liszt

'Liszt Transfigured - Operatic Fantasies'

Grande fantasia sur des thèmes

de l'opéra Niobe de Pacini, S419.

Réminiscences de La Juive, S409a.

Réminiscences de Don Juan, S418.

Fantasie über Themen aus Mozarts

Figaro und Don Giovanni, S697

Chiyan Wong *pf*

Linn © CKD561 (70' • DDD)



Nowadays two distinct approaches to the music of Liszt prevail among pianists. One

group views the published scores as more or less sacrosanct, treating them with the same fidelity they would scores by Chopin or Schumann. The other sees Liszt's published texts as the basis for further embellishment, elaboration and occasionally recomposition. Justification for this approach often cites Liszt's lifelong penchant for revision, the many variants he gave his pupils in the late Weimar masterclasses, and recordings by some of his pupils and others of their generation who opted for a more personal statement in Liszt's music over adherence to the text.

The Hong Kong-born pianist Chiyan Wong is avowedly an advocate of the second approach, as evidenced in his new release of four Liszt opera fantasies, entitled 'Liszt Transfigured'. Beyond the dazzling technical polish he brings to these fiendishly challenging pieces, most striking is Wong's sincerity of purpose. Fortunately, his reverence for Liszt precludes any radical alteration of the scores in the name of pianistic exhibitionism.

The *Niobe* Fantasy, Liszt's vehicle in the 1837 duel with Sigismond Thalberg at Princess Belgiojoso's Paris benefit, is more talked about than actually heard. The earliest recording I'm aware of is Steven Mayer's (ASV, 12/92) and it naturally figures in Leslie Howard's traversal of all Liszt's piano music (Hyperion). Wong's performance deserves an unapologetic place beside them. The *Larghetto* is beautifully wrought with *fioritura* passages that are especially lovely. There is an interpolated cadenza in the *Allegro molto appassionato* but by and large embellishments throughout are tasteful and unobtrusive.

In the fierce Fantasy on Halévy's *La Juive*, another seldom-heard work, there are a few cuts, an extended accompaniment passage is altered from legato to staccato, and there is an interpolated cadenza. The second variation on the Polonaise is deliciously dreamy and atmospheric. Wong captures the passionate fire of this piece with great élan, preserving its shape and textures with plenty of contrasts.

Linn has captured the spectrum of Wong's sound in all its dimensions. In a project that could have easily lapsed from 'Liszt Transfigured' to 'Liszt Disfigured', Wong presents this as yet another unfamiliar corner of the repertoire with musicality bolstered by understanding and conviction. I suspect that, even for those who are not hard-boiled Lisztians, there will be a great deal of interest here. By all means, have a listen.

Patrick Rucker

Liszt • Wagner

Liszt *Années de pèlerinage - année 2: Italie*, S161

- Sposalizio; Il pensiero; Canzonetta del

Salvator Rosa; Sonetto 104 del Petrarca.

Bagatelle sans tonalité, S216a. Gretchen, S513.

La lugubre gondola, S200/1. Nuages gris, S199.

Valse oubliée, S215/2 Wagner Einleitung zu

'Tristan und Isolde', WWV90 (arr Kocsis).

Elegie, WWV93. Isolde's Liebestod aus 'Tristan und Isolde', S447 (transcr Liszt)

Imogen Cooper *pf*

Chandos © CHAN10938 (75' • DDD)



The lyrical refinement that typifies Imogen Cooper's finest recordings suits

this selection of Liszt original works and transcriptions. She may underplay the Second *Valse oubliée*'s climax but her pointing up of the quirky broken rhythmic motif and sensitive shading of the bitonal moments compensates. She holds Liszt's piano version of the *Faust Symphony*'s central 'Gretchen' movement together by shaping the melodic narrative in fluent arcs and never letting the left hand sag for a moment. Because the overall effect is conversational rather than dramatic, the performance winds up sounding far faster than its 19-minute running time implies.

Of the four pieces from the Italian book of *Années de pèlerinage*, 'Sposalizio' and 'Il pensiero' stand out for Cooper's sonorous rhetoric and digging into the big bass-lines, while she really gets into the slightly naive swagger of the 'Canzonetta del Salvator Rosa'. By contrast, the 'Sonetto 104' is a tad held back; the climactic filigree and double notes lack the poetic abandon of pianists as disparate as Horowitz, Bolet and Arrau. Cooper weighs the gnawing dissonances of 'Nuages gris' perfectly, although I prefer Paul Lewis's foreboding textural haze and wider dynamic spectrum (Harmonia Mundi, 10/04).

Cooper's straightforward reading of Wagner's original Elegy in A flat leads into the *Tristan und Isolde* Prelude in the late Zoltán Kocsis's arrangement. The pianist takes care not to exaggerate the big build-up's acceleration, yet her notey upward scales lack a sense of sweep; listen to Kocsis's own recording to hear what's missing (Philips, 9/82 - nla). A stark and forthright performance of *La lugubre gondola* bridges the Prelude and the Wagner/Liszt Liebestod. Cooper doesn't quite match the shimmer and sheen of Bavouzet's gorgeous MDG traversal but she voices the counterpoint scrupulously. The final selection, *Bagatelle sans tonalité*, gets off to a crisp and characterful start, only to grow heavier and less scintillating as it unfolds; no match for Brendel's cutting-edge bite (Decca). On the whole, this release is more persuasive than Cooper's relatively underplayed Chandos Chopin recital (7/16), if not so magically memorable as her Avie Schubert series (9/09, 1/10, 7/10).

Jed Distler



'Dazzling technical polish': Chiyan Wong tackles some of Liszt's most ferociously demanding yet seldom-heard opera fantasies

Montgeroult

Piano Sonata No 9, Op 5 No 3. Complete Course for the Instruction of the Pianoforte - 12 Études

Edna Stern *pf*

Orchid © ORC100063 (53' • DDD)



So far as I can see, this is the first time that Hélène de Montgeroult (1764-1836) has graced these pages. I don't say all the music, on the evidence of this disc, is the work of an unknown genius but she is at the very least a fascinating and intriguingly prescient keyboard voice. Play this blind and who would you say was the composer? Cramer? Dussek? Voříšek? Her biographer, Jérôme Dorival, believes Montgeroult is 'the missing link between Mozart and Chopin'. A moot point, but try the third of her three Op 5 Sonatas published in 1811 and it's a reasonable claim. In any case, Chopin must surely have known her magnum opus, *Complete Course for the Instruction of the Pianoforte* (more than 700 pages, including 114 Études, published in 1816), and in particular

Étude No 107 in D minor, a dry run for his *Revolutionary Study*. Here and elsewhere, Montgeroult's music suffers from what Dorival aptly calls 'plagiarism by anticipation' and it sank into oblivion soon after her death.

Edna Stern deserves the highest praise for resurrecting it, and has the fleet fingers and sensitive musicianship necessary to make the very best case for it. The Sonata is well worth getting to know and some of the 12 Études she has selected are very beautiful. None outstays its welcome. What I was not convinced by was the 1860 Pleyel she plays. Its warm, soft-grained tone is attractive but often at the expense of textual clarity. I'd like to hear more of Montgeroult's music from this artist – maybe the *Fantaisie* from the third volume of the *Cours complet* or her eight other sonatas – but on a modern instrument. **Jeremy Nicholas**

Mozart • Schumann

Mozart Fantasia, K475. Piano Sonata No 14, K457 **Schumann** Fantasie, Op 17. Thema mit Variationen, 'Geistervariationen', WoO24

Piotr Anderszewski *pf*

Warner Classics © (CD + DVD) 9029 58885-5 (79' + 36' • DDD • NTSC • 16:9 • PCM stereo • O • s)

DVD: 'Je m'appelle Varsovie/Warsaw is my Name', a film by Piotr Anderszewski and Julien Condemine



It's questionable whether Mozart intended his C minor Fantasy, K475, to be yoked with the C minor Sonata, K457, in performance. Although he published the pieces together, the assumption that the one is an 'ouverture vers la Sonata', as Warner's booklet-note writer would have it, is surely open to challenge. Why should they be played cheek by jowl when a listener is likely to find that they are autonomous works, of exceptional ambition, that have little to say to each other? Artur Schnabel, Alfred Brendel, Edwin Fischer and Clifford Curzon all agreed; while other fine artists have disagreed, their number now including Piotr Anderszewski.

In the Sonata Anderszewski is rather self-conscious. Why such stentorian *fortissimo* left-hand octaves at the beginning? I regretted too his fallibility in the timing of pauses and silences in the second and third movements. The slow movement,

one of the finest in Mozart's piano sonatas, should convey the presence of a theatrical character with something to sing about, but that effect is only fitful here. The work is not completely inhabited and revealed. In the Fantasy I take issue with exaggerations of tempo and dynamics pushed to extremes. This is edgy Mozart, recorded as long ago as 2006.

The Schumann Fantasy dates from 2013 and shows the consummate player of this composer we already know. The first movement is the most powerful manifestation of the composer's genius and his most successful and original essay in a large form. Most pianists want to measure themselves against its demands; I count Anderszewski's well-recorded version among the best. A current runs through and a line held. His control of mass and pace in the second movement is masterly and allows him to bring to it a welcome variety of sound. When the virtuosity called for in the coda arrives you know he will be on top of it. Sviatoslav Richter, at a quicker tempo, encompasses the coda with no feeling that it has been tacked on to the rest. He recorded the Fantasy for EMI at their Abbey Road Studios in 1961 (3/93) and it remains one of his finest achievements. I shall continue to return to Anderszewski's new version with pleasure but with Richter you sense that, like an eagle in flight, he is without peer in surveying the entire terrain.

Anderszewski's CD is completed by the last music Schumann wrote, the so-called *Ghost Variations*. When you love the music of a composer everything is important, but in Schumann as late as this you're conscious of the difficulty he had in generating notes. The contrast with the Fantasy couldn't be greater. Schumann managed the last of the five variations in 1854 after being pulled from the Rhine by the bargemen.

We are not quite done. A 'bonus' DVD is offered here which is a 36-minute film by Anderszewski entitled *Warsaw is my Name*. The title is explained by a short passage of eloquent prose at the beginning that we are invited to read as it scrolls. We're to take it as personal, I'm sure, and it makes you sit up. Then, without words, there are pictures, on the move but measured, asking us to look, follow, walk, accompany: along the river and the streets, in parks and across bridges, taking in monuments, vistas, apartment blocks, the trams, plus some footage of the destruction of the city in the Second World War. But this is no travelogue. We see through Anderszewski's eyes and take in his counterpoint of image and music

as he plays – three Chopin mazurkas (complete) and the concluding section of the A flat Polonaise, part of Szymanowski's 'Scheherazade' (from *Masques*) and Third Sonata, and every note of Webern's Variations Op 27 (electrifying). As an assemblage it is convincing, companionable, persuasive, hugely intelligent, unpredictable, totally without cliché. I know I shall always want to listen to Anderszewski, but if he's also going to make films occasionally that's also fine by me. **Stephen Plaistow**

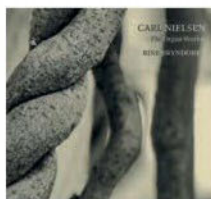
Nielsen

Complete Organ Works

Bine Bryndorf *org* with **Torsten Nielsen** *bar*

Dacapo  6 220635 (78' • DDD/DSD)

Played on the organ of Nikolaj Kunsthal, Copenhagen



This CD is considerably enriched by Bine Bryndorf's detailed and informative booklet-notes. Another plus point is that she plays the fine three-manual, 44-stop organ in Copenhagen's former St Nicholas church. Dating from 1930, this instrument is exactly contemporaneous with Nielsen's organ works. It has lovely soft registers and a well-blended *tutti* – ideal for this repertoire.

The 29 *Little Preludes* and a few miscellaneous works are concise pieces, suitable for liturgical use. They are straightforward compositions, with Baroque-like fugal textures and chordal writing in the manner of Bach and Mendelssohn. Only the occasional unusual harmonies and sudden key changes place this music in the early 20th century. Bryndorf's excellent performances have calm, unhurried tempos, and her imaginative use of the organ gives each of the 29 Preludes their own unique tone colour. The CD also includes the majestic *Festival Prelude for the New Century* and six of Nielsen's *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*. These latter pieces have simple chorale melodies, which are beautifully sung by the baritone Torsten Nielsen.

In contrast, *Commotio* occupies a more complex musical landscape. Given that it was inspired by the playing of the virtuoso German organist Karl Straube – a noted interpreter of Max Reger – it's no surprise to find florid contrapuntal writing and extremely varied dynamics. However, Nielsen's adventurous harmonic language

belongs firmly in the 20th century. One can detect an awareness of Schoenberg's atonal style, alongside pre-echoes of Hindemith's organ sonatas and Sorabji's symphonies. Bryndorf's controlled, measured tempos (possibly a touch too slow in places) and carefully chosen dynamics enable Nielsen's visionary composition to be heard with exemplary clarity.

Christopher Nickol

Reger

'Fantasias & Fugues'

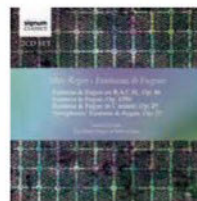
Fantasias and Fugues – Op 29; Op 135*b*; on B-A-C-H, Op 46; 'Symphonic', Op 57

David Goode *org*

Signum  2 SIGCD476 (85' • DDD)

Played on the Klais organ of Bath Abbey

Recorded 2003



Reger wrote four large-scale organ Fantasias and Fugues which were not based on chorale melodies. Ranging in playing length from 17 minutes (Op 29) to more than 25 (Op 57), these comprise the latest release in a slowly emerging series of Reger's organ works from David Goode.

It began in 2003 when Herald released a three-disc set billed as 'Complete Organ Works, Vol 1'. A decade later a two-disc set of Goode playing Reger on the organ of Symphony Hall, Birmingham, appeared (Signum, 3/14), described on Goode's own website as Vol 2 of the Reger series. So, with the appearance of this latest Reger disc, returning to Bath Abbey where Vol 1 was recorded, we can assume Goode has reached the third in the Reger cycle, even if such a designation does not appear anywhere on this two-disc set itself.

Despite their widely spaced release dates (this latest volume misses the centenary of Reger's death by a whisker), all the recordings date from 2003. Consequently there is no sense of a player gradually coming to terms with this difficult (in all senses of the word) music, and while the playing is excellent and Goode shows himself to have a strong understanding of the musical idiom, he generally seems to hold the music at arm's length, never really taking the risks involved in delving much beyond the textural and technical complexities to find the real heart of the music (something Martin Schmeding has so brilliantly achieved in his complete Reger recordings – Cybèle, 3/17).

Goode takes a suitably spacious and expansive view of these four heavyweight works, untangling Reger's characteristically



Piotr Anderszewski reaffirms himself as a consummate player of Schumann

labyrinthine chromatic textures with infinite care and patience. This certainly serves to ease the passage through both the Op 46 work based around the B-A-C-H motif and the truly massive 'Symphonic' Fantasia of Op 57 with its almost frighteningly austere opening gestures, brilliantly delivered here in a burst of dazzling virtuosity.

This relaxed approach pays handsome dividends in the complex Fugue of Op 135*b*, which wanders into an almost impenetrably dark chromatic jungle. Luckily, at 6'40", Goode finds some delightfully sprightly stops from the Bath Abbey Klais and matches them with some equally sylph-like articulation to bring a welcome flash of brightness. He pulls the same trick to alleviate the daunting rock-solid faces of Op 29, where the contrast between the grim full organ and the delicate flutes in the Fantasia brings a rare touch of lightness to proceedings.

Jonathan Wright has produced a fine recorded sound; and while Goode's own booklet-notes are somewhat dry and technical, they are mercifully concise – a description it is difficult to apply to the music on the disc itself. **Marc Rochester**

Rust

'Der Clavierpoet'

Three Sonatas. Variations on the Song 'Blühe liebes Veilchen'

Jermaine Sprosse *clav/lp*

Deutsche Harmonia Mundi © 88985 36927-2 (76' • DDD)



For Vincent d'Indy, the near-forgotten Dessau court composer Friedrich

Wilhelm Rust (1739-96) was 'the connecting link between Haydn and Mozart on the one hand, and Beethoven on the other': a flattering verdict, and, on this showing, not one I can relate to. Listening to these sonatas and variations composed between the mid-1760s and the mid-1790s, I'd place Rust's music somewhere between Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach – one of his teachers – and Haydn, without the genius of either. The early G minor Sonata, in particular, sounds like a series of improvisatory fantasies, à la CPE, though you need Bach's harmonic imagination and sense of dramatic timing to consistently

hold the attention. Bachian *Empfindsamkeit* ('heightened sensitivity') also colours the two later sonatas, where feints at Classical equilibrium are undermined by cadenzas, toccata-like flurries and a general air of waywardness.

Jermaine Sprosse, who has championed and edited Rust's keyboard music (he adds his own slow introduction, obliquely quoting Haydn's *London* Symphony, to the D major Sonata), seeks to enhance this waywardness at every turn. He clearly has a brilliant technique, as evidenced by the dashing and, to my ears, Scarlatti-influenced finale of the C major Sonata. His imagination, too, is never in doubt. Playing on a resonant modern copy of a double-strung clavichord and a finely restored Stein fortepiano, he distends and dreams on the music at the slightest provocation. This can work up to a point, though it becomes near-intolerable in the *Allegros* of the C and D major sonatas, with their enervating *rallentandos* and surreally protracted pauses. With a nod, perhaps, to d'Indy, Sprosse evidently sees Rust as an out-and-out proto-Romantic. But I'm unconvinced by his attempts to distil soulfulness from invention that is often

no more than agreeably routine. The Variations, on a homely canzonetta by Rust's contemporary Johann Schulz, likewise suffer from an excess of 'sensibility', with barely four bars played at a steady tempo. Towards the end of my listening I jotted, impatiently, 'If only he'd let the music "spin".' Which rather sums it up.

Richard Wigmore

Schubert/Busoni

'Complete Transcriptions for Piano Solo' Overtures - D26; D470; D556; D590; D591; D648. Der Teufel als Hydraulicus, D4 - Overture. Five Minuets with Six Trios, D89. Five German Dances with Seven Trios and Coda, D90

Marco Vincenzi *pf*

Dynamic (F) CDS7712 (71' • DDD)



While Mahler was acknowledged as the conductor of his generation (Richard

Strauss his closest rival), Busoni was the supreme pianist. For them, as for their contemporaries, Schubert was a composer of songs and chamber music. When he conducted the last two symphonies, Mahler received reviews ranging from indifference to scorn. Busoni played a few Liszt transcriptions and complained in his dotage that 'master-scores have vanished, but the Entr'acte to *Rosamunde* (unhappily) lives on': an attitude not untypical of his age.

Why, then, did they make their own arrangements of Schubert? Mahler was convinced that a full orchestra could unlock symphonic potential in the *Death and the Maiden* Quartet. Busoni's reason for transcribing seven concert overtures was more down to earth: a commission from Breitkopf & Härtel, which he evidently fulfilled (when is unclear) not least as an exercise of intellectual ingenuity.

Opening the disc with the E minor Overture (D648) was unwise. In his booklet-notes, Marco Vincenzi bestows upon it kinship with the *Unfinished* Symphony: an outlandish claim until you study the orchestral score or listen to a performance of such gripping and immediate drama as that recorded by L'Orfeo Barockorchester (DHM, 11/12). Working backwards from the original to Vincenzi's account of the Busoni transcription requires considerable imaginative sympathy: there is a smudged trill in the second phrase (not a problem in itself but the sign of things to come)

and the excellent Steingraeber instrument is traduced by an airless recording, as if the microphones were almost inside the lid.

The scale of Schubert's instrumental dialogue, and the fizzing wit of the Rossini-inspired works, are thus seriously compromised. Listening past all the bass tremolo and repeated chords reveals a lively rhythmic sense on Vincenzi's part, but more of Busoni's intentions in the E minor Overture may be gleaned from Holger Groschopp as part of his four-CD set of transcriptions (Capriccio); even he draws a veil over the other six overtures.

Peter Quanttrill

Schumann

'The Complete Works for Piano, Vol 6' Four Fugues, Op 72. Kreisleriana, Op 16. Four Marches, Op 76. Paganini Studies - Op 3; Op 10. Four Piano Pieces, Op 32. Three Sonatas for the Young, Op 118. Toccata, Op 7. Variations on a Theme by Beethoven, WoO31

Cédric Pescia *pf*

Claves (F) ② 50-1508/9 (153' • DDD)



In 2006 the Swiss company Claves embarked on a collaboration with the Clara Haskil Competition to record all the piano music of Schumann. To date, Volumes 1 and 3, played by Finghin Collins, Vol 4 by Francesco Pietmontesi, Vols 2 and 5 and now Vol 6 all by Cédric Pescia have appeared. Pescia's discography is already remarkably broad, ranging from Couperin and Bach up through Messiaen, Cage and Gubaidulina.

Pescia's *Kreisleriana*, the centrepiece of this disc, moves boldly from one harmonic pillar to the next, lending his interpretation of this challenging work a strong sense of structural cohesion. On the other hand, his focus on the larger architectural signposts gives short shrift to Schumann's wealth of detail and colour and, consequently, to his psychological complexity. The overall impression strikes as brusque on occasion, as well as a bit rushed. With several fine *Kreislerianas* of late, Nicholas Angelich leading the pack, Pescia faces some stiff competition. The Toccata is a bit on the safe side, though it may be that we've been spoiled by Richter's ebullience in this piece.

In the three *Sonatas for the Young*, Op 118, Pescia does little to alleviate the perhaps inevitable ennui in material

of such repetitious simplicity.

Remarkably, it is in those works that seem not so typically Schumannesque – the two sets of *Paganini Studies*, the archaising Suite, Op 32, and the Four Fugues, Op 72 – that Pescia is at his most relaxed and communicative. The sound is fully dimensional and true to life.

Patrick Rucker

Seabourne

Steps: An Anthology for Piano, Vol 1

Minjeong Shin *pf*

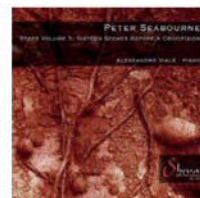
Sheva Collection (F) ② SH168 (85' • DDD)

Seabourne

Steps, Vol 5 - Sixteen Scenes Before a Crucifixion

Alessandro Viale *pf*

Sheva Collection (F) SH136 (54' • DDD)



The five volumes that comprise *Steps* marked an unequivocal return to composition for Peter Seabourne (b1960). The first and last (the central three volumes were reviewed in A/13 and A/14) confirm his music's expressive range; not least an anthological first volume (2006) that juxtaposes evocative studies, lengthy ruminations and pithy vignettes. 'The Little White Girl' takes its cue from a Whistler painting, via a Swinburne poem, when portraying youth as reflected in experience with music both winsome and restless; 'El suspiro del Moro' depicts the last Moorish king's retreat from Granada in epic but also intimate terms; while 'In Winter' draws upon verse by Stefan George and Sylvia Plath for miniatures nostalgic and quizzical.

The fifth volume, *Sixteen Scenes Before a Crucifixion* (2014), is less a collection than a linear meditation on the Passiontide canvases by Caravaggio, as translated into music Seabourne has described as 'overwhelmingly pessimistic and bleak'. This is already evident in 'I', akin to a processional in its sombrely tolling chords and halting rhythmic tread that emerges into the foreground then returns into the distance. 'IV' affords brief affirmation with its ecstatic trills and arabesques, and 'VIII' summons a melody from its texture to moving effect offset by the agitated manner overall. 'XII' is the most complex in meshing antagonistic elements towards a brutal climax, while



Cédric Pescia plays Schumann's *Kreisleriana* with a 'strong sense of structural cohesion'

'XVI' brings a starkly fatalistic ending as betrayal effects crucifixion.

Both these performers are notably attuned to Seabourne's music. The poise and dexterity of Minjeong Shin are notably well served by what is undoubtedly the finest recording on any of these discs, while Alessandro Viale sounds hardly less inside the fraught sound world of his sequence. Informative booklet-notes from the composer. Those who have been collecting this series need not hesitate – though newcomers should certainly begin with Vol 1. **Richard Whitehouse**

'Great American Sonatas'

Bernstein Piano Sonata

Copland Piano Sonata

L Harrison Piano Sonata No 3. Largo ostinato

Ives Three-Page Sonata. The Celestial Railroad

Nathan Williamson pf

Somm Céleste © SOMMCD0163 (78' • DDD)



Aaron Copland's Piano Sonata doesn't exactly lack in first-rate recordings, yet there's certainly room for Nathan Williamson's commanding interpretation.

The outer movements' bold and declamatory chords often can sound bleak and monochrome but Williamson's big, colourful sonority infuses them with resonant warmth and a soaring gravitas that befits the music's lofty aura. In the *Vivace*, Williamson's darting, asymmetric lines don't match the scurrying incisiveness and nervous energy heard in vintage recordings by Leo Smit, Leonard Bernstein, William Masselos or William Kapell in his live 1953 Frick Collection broadcast. Still, any pianist would be happy to claim Williamson's supple facility and suavely navigated rapid interval leaps.

Bernstein's 1938 Piano Sonata (his largest solo keyboard effort) occasionally reveals hints of the mature composer to come in the first-movement *Scherzando*'s jagged rhythms and the *Largo*'s bitonal heart-on-sleeve lyricism. Williamson's expansive, full-bodied phrasing throughout the second movement imbues some of the sparser textures with magisterial sustaining power and timbral heft, abetted by the concert-hall realism of Somm's resonant recorded ambience. Listeners familiar with the joyful exuberance and generosity of Lou Harrison's music from the 1970s

onwards will find a less defined creative personality in the 1938 Third Piano Sonata's craggier music. But the 1937 *Largo ostinato* is simple and beautiful, and Williamson's big sound envelops the room.

The pianist unfolds the exposition of Charles Ives's *Three-Page Sonata* with straightforward calm. If the slow pacing for the central episode causes the music to wander and the march emerging from this section is a mite heavy, Williamson lets the subsequent dissonant ragtime burlesque fly. Ives's *Celestial Railroad* is essentially a reworking of the 'Hawthorne' movement from the composer's earlier *Concord Sonata*. Williamson takes its clotted chords, ragged runs and discombobulated harmonic game plan in easy, virtuoso stride, although some may prefer Stephen Drury's lighter touch and more petulant temperament in the work's opening rumbling paragraphs of arpeggios (New World). In all, a release of distinction.

Jed Distler

Find your
music on
www.qobuz.com

qobuz

George Benjamin

Geraint Lewis explores the acutely imagined sound worlds of one of today's most important British composers

That astonishing scene towards the end of George Benjamin's *Written on Skin* – when Agnès is forced by her husband to eat the cooked heart of her murdered young lover – must surely count as one of the most spine-chilling moments in the history of opera. The brilliantly etched text by Martin Crimp allows us, as stunned spectators, to sense the unspeakable horror about to happen while simultaneously realising that Agnès herself is momentarily ignorant of what she's eating. Benjamin's equally forensic music fits every word like a glove and succeeds in bridging the sudden dawning of Agnès's absolute hell, as it turns into a gleam of inner redemptive power, with seamless eloquence: 'No – no – nothing – Nothing you can do – Nothing I ever eat / nothing I drink / will ever take the taste of that Boy's heart / out of this body.'

'His later music allows the emergence of a visceral and violent agony which tears apart any sense of quiet decorum'

Since its premiere at the 2012 Aix-en-Provence Festival, *Written on Skin* has enjoyed a triumphant progress around the world, and in January this year returned to the Royal Opera House for a revival that saw capacity crowds for six performances. Such statistics are rare in the supposedly specialist world of contemporary opera – and in Benjamin and Crimp's case this is achieved without any artistic or cultural compromise of their single-minded vision. Their journey together started with the one-act 'lyric tale' *Into the Little Hill* at the Paris Autumn Festival in 2006; and a new recording about to be released on Nimbus Records, featuring Benjamin conducting his long-term colleagues Susan Bickley and the London Sinfonietta, potently underlines the creative synergy which promises so much for the third collaboration, due to be introduced at Covent Garden in 2018. It is both telling and reassuring to know that Benjamin has managed to clear his diary for the whole of 2017 in order to concentrate completely on this exciting new operatic phase in his career.

Benjamin today is softly spoken, modestly mannered and carefully considerate. During my last year at Cambridge in the late 1970s I well remember that word spread like wildfire of a new composer student who would soon set the musical world alight. On a brief meeting then he seemed exactly as he does now – the very antithesis of a wild compositional prodigy. Appearances can be so deceptive! But as quickly as summer 1980 his orchestral *Ringed by the Flat Horizon* took the Proms

BENJAMIN FACTS

Born London, January 31, 1960

Composition studies

Paris Conservatoire from 1976 with Olivier Messiaen, then Cambridge University with Alexander Goehr and Robin Holloway

Landmark debut *Ringed by the Flat Horizon*, conducted by Mark Elder at the 1980 Proms

Major working partnerships

London Sinfonietta, Ensemble Modern, Mahler Chamber Orchestra

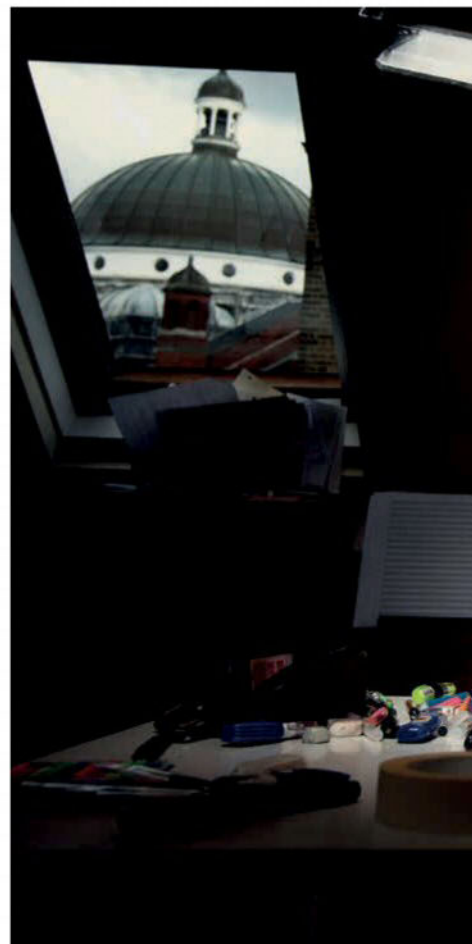
Teaching position

Henry Purcell Professor of Composition at King's College, London

by storm, with Benjamin becoming the youngest composer ever to have a work premiered there. His musical pedigree was now examined thoroughly by the world at large and initial training from Peter Gellhorn while still at Westminster School, early entry into Messiaen's class at the Paris Conservatoire and further study at Cambridge with Alexander Goehr and Robin Holloway confirmed on paper what the ear heard so eloquently in the meticulous scoring, sustained structure and sheer aural brilliance of this orchestral score, inspired by an image from TS Eliot's *The Waste Land*.

As *Ringed by the Flat Horizon* began its steady progress into the large-orchestral repertoire, so a couple of smaller canvases amply consolidated its promise and revealed the sheer depth of Benjamin's technical finesse, detailed imagination and harmonic ingenuity. *A Mind of Winter* was first heard at the 1981 Aldeburgh Festival and sets Wallace Stevens's *The Snowman* with delicious filigree textures and an unerring sensitivity to textual nuance. With *At First Light* in 1982 for the London Sinfonietta and Simon Rattle, Benjamin turned to visual imagery in this translation into sound of the magical, light-infused *Norham Castle, Sunrise* by Turner (which can be seen in Tate Britain). Here, the composer's virtuosity is further enhanced in its dazzling treatment of a very specific instrumental grouping just as it unfolds a seemingly spontaneous but satisfyingly grounded structure.

These early years saw Benjamin embarking on crucial partnerships with a publisher – Faber Music – and recording company – Nimbus Records. That these remain unbroken to this day after nearly 40 years speaks volumes for the trust, loyalty and dedication shown by each to the other. Another side of Benjamin's career, which both have continuously encouraged, is that of his exceptional performing skills as pianist and conductor. The coruscating Piano Sonata written in Paris in 1977-78 featured on his debut LP for Nimbus and he was soon conducting the London Sinfonietta on its successor CD. Such multitalented composers are not of course





unique – one thinks immediately of Knussen, Adès, Huw Watkins and Ryan Wigglesworth – but there is, nevertheless, a special quality to the creative symbiosis Benjamin makes of his interconnected abilities. In the early days, indeed, such prodigious talent led inevitably to exaggerated comparisons with Benjamin Britten – which Benjamin himself deflected very deftly. But even though he has explored as conductor the works of many composers close to his own spirit with great insight – Berlioz, Debussy, Ravel, Messiaen, Boulez, Harvey and Grisey spring notably to mind, among many others – he has tended of late to harness his career in this area towards the expert interpretation of his own scores.

What today's unquestioned fulfilment of very early promise demonstrates beyond doubt, however, is that Benjamin needed nerves of steel to survive – unimpaired – into this rich maturity. The darker underside of undue and premature expectations can be a lack of time and space to develop at the speed appropriate to an individual's unique creativity. In learning the hard way, Benjamin managed to turn one or two difficult commissions into a deeper understanding of the gestation period needed; and when *Sudden Time* finally emerged in 1993 (having been begun in 1989), its fulminant energy and explosive impact confirmed that the wait had been worth it. Here, then, was a new, tensile power feeding a heightened freedom of emotional expression: qualities quickly concentrated in the lyrical impaction of the *Three Inventions* (a densely layered triptych premiered at the 1995 Salzburg Festival) right down to the iconically graphic *Viola, Viola* (1997), back through the pair of large-chamber-orchestral *Palimpsests* (2000-02), the pivotal set of choreographic-orchestral

Dance Figures (2004) to the abstract drama of *Duet* (2008) for piano and orchestra, featuring Pierre-Laurent Aimard as collegial soloist.

Tracing Benjamin's slow and careful evolution is to follow a series of sudden epiphanies in which new compositional territory emerges hand in hand with a freshly minted world of sonority. Nothing is seemingly off-limits. From the IRCAM-originated synthesised panpipes of *Antara* (1987-89) we move immediately into the arcane sound world of the Elizabethan viol consort as the perfect backdrop to a haunting setting for mezzo-soprano of Yeats's 'Long-Legged Fly' under the eloquent title *Upon Silence* (1990). The small ensemble of *Into the Little Hill* crackles with exotic cimbalom, just as the full orchestra of *Written on Skin* resonates atmospherically with the ghostly halo of a glass harmonica; other telling examples proliferate. Nothing by Benjamin is written without a consummate sense of balance, yet his later music also allows the unexpected emergence of a visceral and violent agony which tears apart any outward sense of quiet decorum. The latest score, *Dream of the Song* (2014-15), is a sensuous exploration of the interstices between words and musical expression which stretches Benjamin's palette to its kaleidoscopic extreme in juxtaposing countertenor, female voices and full orchestra.

With an English sensibility that he finds rooted in the fantastical world of Henry Purcell, George Benjamin is also a composer of truly international stature. His initial immersion in the French ambience of Messiaen and Boulez found a reciprocal responsive home there, but without any limiting sense of partiality. Linguistically, Benjamin delves deep for an intuitive reconciliation of opposing tensions which he has to forge anew for each new work. In saying that there is possibly no more gifted or significant composer working anywhere today, any sense of exaggeration is tempered by the sumptuous reality of his output to date. **G**

LISTEN TO BENJAMIN

A selection covering the whole range of a rich catalogue

- | | |
|---|---|
| | <p>Ringed by the Flat Horizon. At First Light.
 A Mind of Winter. Antara. Panorama
 BBC SO / Mark Elder; London Sinfonietta / George Benjamin
 Nimbus © NI5643 (1/89⁸, 6/00)</p> |
| <p>The full resources of a symphony orchestra are handled with rare, economical mastery in Benjamin's breakthrough score and flower anew in turning to a chamber-orchestral canvas.</p> | |
| | <p>Three Inventions. Upon Silence. Sudden Time. Octet
 Susan Bickley; London Sinfonietta; London Philharmonic Orchestra; Fretwork / George Benjamin
 Nimbus © NI5505 (4/97)</p> |
| <p>A compendium which explores the full expressive power of Benjamin's work from the 1990s in using a dazzling range of resources. Susan Bickley sings with unique understanding.</p> | |
| | <p>Written on Skin
 Christopher Purves, Barbara Hannigan, Bejun Mehta, Allan Clayton; Royal Opera House Orchestra / George Benjamin
 Opus Arte © DVD OA1125D; © OABD7136D (4/14)</p> |
| <p>Katie Mitchell's much-praised production is seen here in its Covent Garden incarnation with Benjamin himself at the helm. The original cast responds with tailor-made immediacy.</p> | |

Vocal



Tim Ashley hails a new recording of Liszt's still underrated songs:

'Fallon's voice is exceptional, capable of both ringing high notes and a superbly controlled mezza voce' ► **REVIEW ON PAGE 95**



Alexandra Coughlan welcomes a new masque from Elizabeth Kenny:

'The violins switch from court to country tavern in a heartbeat, making rough magic of the many anonymous dances' ► **REVIEW ON PAGE 102**

JS Bach

Mass in B minor, BWV232

Christina Landshamer *sop* **Anke Vondung** *mez*

Maximilian Schmitt *ten* **Andreas Wolf** *bass-bar*

Bavarian Radio Chorus; Concerto Köln;

Peter Dijkstra

BR-Klassik © 900516

(106' • NTSC • 16:9 • DTS5.1 & PCM stereo • O • T)
Recorded live at the St Lorenz-Kirche, Nuremberg,
June 3, 2016



The filming of this B minor Mass operates under some confusion as to whether the music is there to illustrate the

St Laurence Church of Nuremberg or vice versa. Showing the church roof and then a slow credit roll is no way to treat the grand opening statement of the *Kyrie*, and the camera looks heavenwards just when all voices and instruments are going hell for leather at the climax of the 'Cum Sancto Spiritu'.

Musical direction is handled by Peter Dijkstra, artistic director of the Bavarian Radio Choir until last year, and it's a choirmaster's sort of performance, bouncily articulated, disciplined and well-mannered to a fault, with the first-class members of Concerto Köln left largely to sleepwalk through some of the most vital counterpoint ever conceived by mind of man. Even the trumpets are subtle. The 'Osanna' fugue has rarely sounded so relaxed, or so inconsequential. The audio production is excellent, lending equal weight to strands of instrumental and choral argument so that the vital moving part of the violas in the 'Qui tollis' cuts through the texture.

The choir is slimmed down from its usual *Resurrection* Symphony-size to eight or so voices to a part, with an all-female alto section that has no trouble asserting itself. Its members sing with professionally polished regard to each others' parts, but then so did their counterparts in 1994, when they were moulded and raised to

inspiration by the considerably more engaged direction of Carlo Maria Giulini (Sony Classical, 3/95).

Within the constraints of an overall lack of ambition, the soloists all acquit themselves well. The adaptable Anke Vondung sings both 'Laudamus te' and 'Qui sedes', but her voice expands more gratefully into the lower register of 'Et in unum Dominum' and especially the 'Agnus Dei', in a rare and welcome passage of sustained pathos. The closing 'Dona nobis' returns to business as usual. **Peter Quantrill**

JS Bach

St John Passion, BWV245

Nicholas Phan *ten* Evangelist **Jesse Blumberg** *bar*

Christus **Jeffrey Strauss** *bar* Pilatus **Amanda**

Forsythe *sop* **Terry Wey** *counterten* **Christian**

Immler *bar* **Apollo's Singers; Apollo's Fire /**

Jeannette Sorrell

Avie © 2 AV2369 (108' • DDD • T/U)

JS Bach

St John Passion, BWV245

Andreas Post *ten* Evangelist **Christoph Schweizer**

bar Christus **Bernhard Spingler** *bass* Pilatus

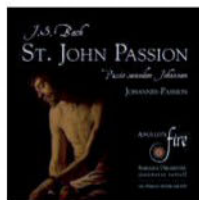
Veronika Winter *sop* **Franz Vitzthum** *counterten*

Stefan Weible *ten* **Thomas Laske** *bar* **Lucian Eller**

bass **Stuttgart Hymnus-Chorknaben; Handel's**

Company / Rainer Johannes Homburg

Dabringhaus und Grimm © 2 MDG902 1985-6
(107' • DDD/DSD)



This admirable *St John Passion* by Apollo's Fire has dramatic tautness tempered by musical finesse nurtured by conductor Jeannette Sorrell (directing from the chamber organ in the recitatives and arias). The Apollonian music-making is characterised by instrumental playing of elegant refinement, polished choral singing (23 voices, including all soloists except the Evangelist), and communicative delivery of the text. The recording was made in

Cleveland in connection with a dramatised production in which characters sang from memory on a platform at the centre of the orchestra, and some of the choir were placed among the audience (from which position the angry mob calling 'Kreuzige ihn!' must have generated potent verisimilitude).

'Herr, unser Herrscher' has a measured transparency thanks to finely balanced instrumental strands and sweetly moulded choral phrasing. Chorales convey textural clarity and poeticism, and the pious lullaby 'Ruht wohl' is sculpted with deft harmonic shapeliness. Nicholas Phan's ardent Evangelist paints with a breadth of vocal colours his descriptions of Peter's bitter weeping and mortification that the crowd wish to free the murderer Barabbas; in 'Erwäge' his excellent soft singing regrettably caves in to loudly exaggerated forcefulness in some passages. Terry Wey's voice quivers a little unevenly but 'Es ist vollbracht' has beguiling intimacy. Amanda Forsythe is technically sure and vocally charming in both of her arias, and there is sincere gentleness in Christian Immler's 'Mein teurer Heiland' (its underlying chorale judged beautifully). Sorrell's keen attention to detail ensures that in many respects this recording hits the sweet spot time and again.

If you enjoy the *St John Passion* with more flesh on its bones, Stuttgart's Hymnus-Chorknaben, the instrumental ensemble Handel's Company and conductor Rainer Johannes Homburg conjure a fascinating range of broader sonorities. The resolute personality adopted for the opening chorus plods with the large boys' choir (upwards of 50 singers) lagging slightly behind the beat here and there, and swamping the standard slim Baroque band of 18 players, but the orchestral bass-line throws some rasping punches on account of the optional contrabassoon Bach added to his final revision of the score in 1749. There is copious lute continuo throughout – something Bach probably did in 1724 but not under normal circumstances;



'Absorbing and sonically thrilling': the Crouch End Festival Chorus and Bach Camerata are on top form in their English-sung Bach St John Passion

Lee Santana's discreet plucking subtly supports Hille Perl's spellbinding viola da gamba in 'Es ist vollbracht', sung by Franz Vitzthum with perfect decorum.

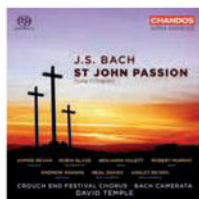
The distinctive sonority of two unison flutes is embraced in 'Ich folge dir gleichfalls' and Veronika Winter's singing is profoundly lovely. Andreas Post's occasionally acerbic Evangelist is deeply involved in the emotional pull of the storytelling: the scene depicting the interrogation of Christ by Pilate – with its mingling of narrative, theatrical and contemplative elements for numerous participants – is highly charged in its dramatic peaks and pensive in the responding numbers featuring violas d'amore (Thomas Laske's 'Betrachte, meine Seel', performed with hushed serenity, and Post's softly mellifluous 'Erwäge'). Recorded in a fulsome acoustic at the Erlöserkirche in suburban Stuttgart, the technical nuts and bolts of the choral contributions are seldom perfect (the boys sound rough and ready in chorales and 'Ruht wohl' is clumpy). Nevertheless, the subject-matter is treated compellingly, and the range of colours from the instrumentalists in partnership with the excellent soloists is memorably poignant.

David Vickers

JS Bach

St John Passion, BWV245 (*sung in English*)

Robert Murray *ten* Evangelist **Ashley Riches**
bass-bar Christus **Andrew Ashwin** *bar* Pilatus **Sophie Bevan**, **Rosemary Zolynski** *sops* **Robin Blaze**
counterten **Benjamin Hulett**, **Robin Pietà** *tens*
Neal Davies *bass-bar* **Crouch End Festival Chorus**;
Bach Camerata / **David Temple**
 Chandos ® ② CHSA5183 (110' • DDD • T)



For the past 45 years the benchmark recording of Bach's *St John Passion* sung in

English has been that conducted by Britten for Decca (recorded in Snape Maltings in April 1971). An all-star cast, headed by Peter Pears as the Evangelist, were ably supported by the Wandsworth School Boys' Choir (now sadly destroyed by myopic educational folly) and the English Chamber Orchestra, singing Pears's and Imogen Holst's (then recent) translation.

Now Chandos has grasped the mantle and headed to St Jude-on-the-Hill, Hampstead Garden Suburb, there to set down the first recording of Neil Jenkins's New Novello Choral Edition English translation, which builds on the earlier

doughty efforts of John Troutbeck (1896) and TA Lacey (1929). I must confess that – given a long-held preference for listening to (and performing) works in their original tongue – I was prepared to scoff at such an affront to Bach's intentions. However, by the end of the opening chorus and the Evangelist's first gripping appearance I was completely hooked, being agreeably surprised at the immediacy of meaning. It helps that Jenkins has taken such care to match many of Bach's starting consonants, that rhyming schemes are maintained wherever possible and that each of Bach's syllables has an English equivalent of similar stress.

In these days of 'historically informed', one-to-a-part-Bach some potential buyers might balk at the prospect of listening to a large chorus of one hundred; indeed, there are a few places where their sheer heft overwhelms the two dozen members of the Bach Camerata (who play at A=415Hz). However, one will struggle to find more committed, well-balanced, agile and crisp singing than that of the Crouch End Festival Chorus, who are on top form throughout. Under David Temple's inspired direction they can switch in an instant from a focused fervour (in their chorales) to the most vengeful scornfulness

imaginable. Temple favours brisk tempos, constantly driving the restless dramatic undercurrent. This energetic impulse is leapt on by the Evangelist, Robert Murray, whose light, expressive approach is a long way from Pears's laboured mannerisms. Ashley Riches, too, captures Jesus's utterances with a heartbreaking simplicity. Frankly, none of the soloists could be bettered, nor the superb continuo team, led by organist Peter Jackel. It is also worth buying this recording just to savour Reiko Ichise's viola da gamba obbligato. Congratulations to all concerned on producing such a buoyant, absorbing and sonically thrilling recording. **Malcolm Riley**

Clérambault

Magnificat, C136. Monstra te esse matrem, C132. Motet à 3 voix tiré du Psaume 76, C130. Motet pour la canonisation de Saint Pie, C150. O piissima, o sanctissima mater, C135. Panis angelicus, C131. Salve regina, C114. Sub tuum praesidium, C104

Ensemble Sébastien de Brossard /

Fabien Armengaud org/hpd

Paraty © PARATY516141 (75' • DDD • T/t)



Those steeped in the finest lineages of the French Baroque acknowledge

Clérambault as a master of the keyboard and a prolific composer of cantatas. What these eight pristine motets for three *concertante* male voices confirm is an extraordinarily imaginative and accomplished creator of keenly observed devotional musical texts, both dramatic and reflective.

While the majority of the works are dominated by common Marian themes, the resourcefulness of scoring, gesture and colour take the listener into realms of contrast belying the conformity of the subject. Indeed, the joy of this project lies in two traits deeply resonant in Clérambault's favour: a fastidious attention to detail (almost, but not quite, fussy) gleaned from his preparation as a prolific publisher of his work and, not unconnected, an almost evangelical projection of ideas demanding to make themselves heard.

The economic but telling graphic imagery of Psalm 76, with 'the waters shaken by fear', or the more opulent panegyric on the canonisation of Pope Pius V demonstrate a broad instinct moving effortlessly between the indigenously lyrical and the comparatively *rappresentativo* elements of Clérambault's Italianate models.

It's the former that the singers of the Brossard Ensemble seem to relish with the deftest sensibility: the *Salve regina*, on the surface at least, draws on the kind of inward vocal rhetoric and subtlety of Couperin's three *Leçons de Ténèbres*. The only spoiling happens when the haute-contre (the notoriously perilous and specialist tenor *fach* which Charpentier and Rameau drew upon so characteristically) sears through the ensemble with an uncomfortably astringent timbre.

Most convincing are the tightly scored dovetailing trios, such as the glorious 'Et misericordia' from the *Magnificat*. This is music crying out for suppleness and, again, one too often wishes for a softer-edged and more finessed vocal production to make this a release of real distinction. Clérambault's genius still shines through despite the reservations and a rather boxy recorded sound. **Jonathan Freeman-Attwood**

Debussy • Fauré

'Fêtes galantes'

Debussy Trois Chansons de Bilitis. Fêtes galantes – Set 2. Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé Fauré Cinq Mélodies 'de Venise', Op 58. La chanson d'Ève, Op 95

Bettina Smith *mez* Einar Røttingen *pf*

LAWO Classics © LWC1116 (56' • DDD • T/t)



The Norwegian mezzo Bettina Smith collaborates here with her compatriot, pianist

Einar Røttingen, on a fine if shortish programme of French song-cycles in which 'jouissance turns to tristesse', as the booklet-notes inform us. Debussy's *Trois Chansons de Bilitis* and Fauré's *La chanson d'Ève* are recorded together for the first time since Dawn Upshaw's 'Voices of Light' and they make a striking pairing, with Bilitis's naive sexuality nicely contrasted with Ève's gathering awareness that God's Eden ambiguously encompasses desire, danger and intimations of mortality. The two cycles are separated by the erotic wit of Fauré's Venetian songs, the disillusionment of Debussy's second *Fêtes galantes* set and the cautious rapture of his three Mallarmé settings.

The disc is, however, uneven. Smith's darkish mezzo reveals occasional constriction at the top when singing softly. Everything is very reined in, with dynamics carefully shaded. Yet, as Véronique Gens's very differently programmed 'Néère' (Alpha, 1/16) admirably proved, French song need not always be about restraint, and there

are moments when you wish Smith would sometimes let the voice out more and adopt a broader interpretative spectrum. The richness of the sound suits Ève but makes Bilitis too overtly knowing – and Upshaw more successfully, and subtly, conveys the half-voiced emotions of both cycles.

Cinq Mélodies de Venise, meanwhile, lies high and occasionally lacks charm. But the Mallarmé songs sound languidly voluptuous, and Set 2 of *Fêtes galantes*, with its regretful, bitter colloquies, is delivered with an insistent intensity that makes it utterly engaging. Røttingen, meanwhile, provides more consistent pleasures with playing of beguiling elegance and beauty throughout. **Tim Ashley**

Chansons de Bilitis, Chanson d'Ève – selected comparison:

Upshaw, Kalish (2/05) (NONE) 7559 79812-2

Donizetti • Mayr

Donizetti *Messa di Gloria. Credo.*

Ave Maria Mayr Sanctus. Agnus Dei

Siri Karoline Thornhill, Marie-Sophie Pollak *sops*

Marie-Sande Papenmeyer *contr* Mark Adler *ten*

Martin Berner *bass* Simon Mayr Choir; Members of the Bavarian State Opera Chorus; Concerto de Bassus / Franz Hauk

Naxos © 8 573605 (86' • DDD • T/t)



After hearing Rossini's *Stabat mater*, the French writer Théophile Gautier

remarked, approvingly, that Italian church music was 'toujours en fête'. It's party time with a vengeance in the *Messa di Gloria* concocted by conductor Franz Hauk from assorted individual movements by the young Donizetti. There are moments of impressive solemnity, both in the *Messa di Gloria* (ie *Kyrie* and *Gloria*) and the *Credo* in D, reworked from an earlier *Credo* in E flat for a performance in Donizetti's home town of Bergamo. But from the tootling, clarinet-led march that launches the 'Christe eleison', the Ordinary becomes a pretext for a vocal-instrumental concert. The first clarinet (unnamed here) has a starring role both in the soprano aria 'Laudamus te' and the 'Domine Deus', an operatic-style cavatina-cabaletta for baritone. Horn and soprano duet amiably in the 'Qui tollis peccata mundi', while in the 'Qui sedes' a solo violin swoops and skitters above the tenor. Even when Donizetti embarks on a fugue, as in 'Cum Sancto Spiritu', operatic jollity is never far away. Haydn's late Masses and Rossini's *Petite Messe solennelle* seem positively austere by comparison.



American tenor Timothy Fallon's exceptional voice and emotional subtlety impress in Liszt songs – see review on page 95

With a thin dividing line between hedonistic exuberance and vapidness, this composite Mass – agreeably completed with movements by Donizetti's mentor Simon Mayr – needs committed advocacy, plus a fair dose of Italianate panache. On the whole it gets it here. Franz Hauk obviously believes in the music and draws finely shaped and, where apt, full-bloodedly theatrical playing from his Bavarian forces. There is outstanding work from solo clarinet, horn and violin, and the woodwind choir carol delightfully in Mayr's pastoral *Benedictus*. The soloists all have pleasing voices and blend well in ensemble, though only the Norwegian soprano Siri Karoline Thornhill has the *bel canto* finesse this music ideally requires. Her exquisitely poised singing of the 'Qui tollis', the wide intervals cleanly and gracefully taken, is a highlight of the whole performance. Less satisfying is the contribution of the chorus, sometimes rather raw-toned, often underpowered – though in mitigation they are balanced too far back in relation to the orchestra. Despite these niggles, those with a taste for *bel canto* opera-by-other-means can confidently investigate some enjoyable neglected music and savour some alluring playing and solo soprano singing en route.

Richard Wigmore

Hawes

Beatitudes^a. *Be Still*^a. *The Edenham Eucharist* – *The Lord's Prayer*. *Let Us Love*^a. *Revelation*. *The Word*. *Peace Beyond Thought*. *Quanta Qualia*^b
The Elora Singers / Noel Edison with
^b**John Johnson** *asax* ^a**Leslie De'Ath** *pf*
 Naxos Ⓜ 8 573720 (64' • DDD • T)



Success is a double-edged sword. Become composer-in-residence of a popular classical radio station, feted by the masses and commissioned by royalty, and expect an avalanche of negative comments from a band of critics for whom epithets such as 'sweet harmonies', 'light, tuneful melodies' and 'benign mood music' are to music what a cold shower is to a hydrophobic cat. Patrick Hawes's *Revelation* makes a convincing case that there is more to his music than the nice veneer that glossed recent releases such as 'Angel' and 'Blue in Blue', and heard here on the ever-popular *Quanta Qualia*.

If nothing else, *Revelation* – settings of the Biblical text in seven short sections, bookended with a prologue and epilogue – demonstrates the scope of Hawes's musical style. His direct and immediate response to

the text from the Book of Revelation produces moments of vivid word-painting, such as the doom-laden descending line at the end of 'Fallen is Babylon the Great'. Stark contrasts are set up between beginning and end in the Epilogue, 'The Alpha and the Omega'. Hawes explores more distant tonal relationships in 'Coming with the Clouds'. He shows how inventive he can be with harmony in 'From the Throne' – moving lines in contrary motion to create crunchy dissonances – then cleverly melds mellifluous modal melodies with bright tonal interjections in 'A Great and Wondrous Sign'. Noel Edison and The Elora Singers do much to bring the music to life in a wonderfully resonant and energetic performance.

If the text of *Revelation*, with its dramatic contrasts of darkness and light, good and evil, jolts Hawes out of his comfort zone, *Beatitudes* appears to have done the opposite. We are back in the composer's more familiar tonal landscape, but it's nevertheless difficult to resist the calm, serene beauty and simplicity that belongs to 'The Pure in Heart' and 'The Peacemakers', or the life-affirming *Be Still*. *Revelation* shows that Hawes's music can be creative and compelling, revealing itself in several different ways. **Pwyll ap Siôn**

LES ARTS FLORISSANTS PAUL AGNEW

MONTEVERDI MADRIGALI VOL.3 | VENEZIA



© Jean-Baptiste Millot
CD HAF 8905278

Monteverdi and the *seconda prattica*

Recorded at the Cité de la Musique during the complete cycle of Monteverdi madrigals mounted in partnership with the Philharmonie de Paris and the Théâtre de Caen, the last volume in our trilogy probably contains the best-loved gems of a composer who had become *maestro di cappella* at St Mark's in Venice, and finally entered the priesthood. Alongside the great operas that have survived from this period, the final madrigals methodically explore the multiple possibilities offered by the rapidly developing practice of basso continuo and by an unprecedented exploitation of solo voices. And, in that respect, the celebrated *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* forms a spectacular finale to our Monteverdian adventure!

Liszt

Drei Lieder aus Schillers Wilhelm Tell, S292. Tre Sonetti di Petrarca, S270. Angiolin dal biondo crin, S269. Comment, disaient-ils, S276. Enfant, si j'étais roi, S283. Go not, happy day, S335. Ihr Glocken von Marling, S328. Jugendglück, S323. Kling leise, mein Lied, S301. Oh! quand je dors, S282. S'il est un charmant gazon, S284

Timothy Fallon *ten* **Ammiel Bushakevitz** *pf*
BIS Ⓢ BIS2272 (66' • DDD/DSD • T/t)



The American tenor Timothy Fallon first came to the attention of UK audiences

when he won the Wigmore Hall/Kohn Foundation International Song Competition in 2013. Liszt's first Petrarch Sonnet, 'Pace non trovo', formed part of his programme, and it is with a performance of the complete cycle that he opens his excellent debut album of the composer's songs. His voice is exceptional, darkish in tone, evenly produced, capable of both ringing high notes and a superbly controlled *mezza voce*. It enables him to encompass both a big statement of desire at the centre of 'Benedetto sia 'l giorno' and the rapt sense of mystic contemplation which is the cycle's eventual goal. His way with words is thoughtful, considerate: the catalogue of emotions – 'temo, e spero, ed ardo', etc – that opens 'Pace non trovo' is carefully if tellingly negotiated; later on, the Hugo settings 'Comment disaient-ils' and 'Enfant, si j'étais roi' gleam with understated wit and sensuality.

Wonderful though it is, however, the combination of strength, refinement and care just occasionally feels too contained. 'Oh! quand je dors', its final phrase astonishingly floated, is exquisite, though the song itself ultimately calls out for the grander passions of Brigitte Fassbaender with Irwin Gage (DG, 4/87). Roughly half of Fallon's programme duplicates Matthew Polenzani's for Hyperion's Liszt series (1/11); and while Fallon's emotional subtlety gives his Petrarch Sonnets marginally the greater edge, many, I suspect, will prefer the impetuous adrenalin rush of Polenzani's *Drei Lieder aus Wilhelm Tell*, where Fallon, though effortless, is interpretatively more reined in. Similar comparisons extend to their respective pianists, with Ammiel Bushakevitz's nuanced control effectively complementing Julius Drake's more overt virtuosity and weight. Both discs are superb, however, and any choice between them is a matter of individual taste. No serious Lisztian will want to be without either. **Tim Ashley**

Mawby

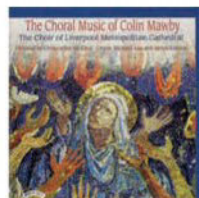
Alma redemptoris mater. Ave Maria. Ave regina caelorum. Ave verum corpus. Cantate. Caro mea. Celtic Blessing. Crux fidelis. Liverpool Mass – Gloria. Magnificat octavi toni. Magnificat primi toni. O sacrum convivium. Pater noster. Placare Christe servulis. Psalm 150. Regina caeli. Regina caeli a 4. The Reproaches. Salve regina. Salve regina a 8

The Choir of Liverpool Metropolitan

Cathedral / Christopher McElroy with

Richard Lea, James Luxton *org*

Priory Ⓢ PRCD1163 (80' • DDD • T/t)



The English Catholic liturgy is far less well served by contemporary

composers than its Anglican counterpart. Colin Mawby is a rare exception – a figure who has spent over three decades working within the Catholic Church as organist, as conductor (including 15 years as Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral) and, chiefly, as composer. This selection of Mawby's choral works by The Choir of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, released late in 2016 to celebrate the composer's 80th birthday year, is a heartfelt homage from an ensemble with a long relationship to Mawby and his music.

Mawby is above all a composer of functional church music, with a sympathetic understanding both of congregational needs (his Eucharistic chants will be familiar to many who might not know the composer's name) and of congregational wishes for direct, emotionally accessible works. The result is a sequence of effective anthems and settings in two contrasting modes.

We open in festal joy and scope in the *Liverpool Gloria*, bright with brass fanfares and declamatory choral writing. The same energy and modal harmonies recur in the two dancing settings of the *Regina caeli*, neatly sung by Liverpool's trebles under the direction of Christopher McElroy, and the assertive *Cantate* with its *cori spezzati*-style opening. In contrast are the pastel-coloured *Ave verum corpus*, all smudgy added-note chords and hymn-like simplicity, the other-worldly *Celtic Blessing* and the *Salve regina* – a modal, Howellsian meditation for trebles.

There's a lot of Howells here, one way and another, but never quite brought into full dramatic focus. The effect, especially as delivered by a choir consistently lighter and more distant in the mix than the organ, is of clouds of musical incense – pleasantly scented but ultimately evanescent.

Alexandra Coghlan

Mendelssohn

A Midsummer Night's Dream – Overture, Op 21; Incidental Music, Op 61 (excs)

Ceri-lyn Cissone, Alexander Knox, Frankie

Wakefield *actors* **Monteverdi Choir; London**

Symphony Orchestra / Sir John Eliot Gardiner

LSO Live Ⓢ (Ⓢ + Ⓢ) LSO0795 (55' • DDD/DSD •

DTS-HD MA5.1 & LPCM stereo, both 24 bit/192kHz)

Recorded live at the Barbican, London,

February 16, 2016



Anyone following this Mendelssohn series from the LSO and John Eliot Gardiner

will find much to enjoy here: in the pinpoint precision of melody-carrying flutes and violins, the sure-footed bass and above all a sense that the composer is being taken seriously. The Monteverdi Choir and stand-out soloists spin magic from their brief contributions; the Scherzo has the same irresistible momentum and danger as the comparable movements in the First Symphony (reviewed on SACD, 10/16), which was performed in the first half of the same concert and is reissued on the Blu-ray disc as part of a film of the entire concert.

Like Claudio Abbado on his late BPO recording (Berliner Philharmoniker, 3/16), Gardiner omits some music for the rude mechanicals – the parodistic little funeral march is a particular loss – and there is an impression common to both that they are more comfortable with the lofty, Athenian nature of Mendelssohn's inspiration than his touches of broad, naturalistic humour. The Wedding March is rather stiff, and the Nocturne is played as a symphonic slow movement compared to the more urgent, chamber-scale approach of Thomas Dausgaard (BIS, 1/16).

Some of the missing mischief is supplied by the concert film. The Barbican stage is set in sylvan blue and green, and flitting around the orchestra are three young British actors, graduates from the Guildhall School next door. Ceri-lyn Cissone switches between Titania, Hermia and Fairy, while Frankie Wakefield doubles as Oberon/Theseus and Alexander Knox as Lysander/Puck. Never arch or plain, their contributions are adapted and sensitively expanded from the Shakespearean cues printed in the Breitkopf edition. In both concept and delivery, they bind the music together as a conversation piece *sui generis*, recommendable as such as an alternative to both the music-only Dausgaard and Klemperer and the many 'sweet savours' of Seiji Ozawa's version (DG, 10/94), where Dame Judi Dench does all the voices. **Peter Quantrill**

Monteverdi

'Madrigali, Vol 3 - Venezia'

Madrigals: Book 7 - Al lume delle stelle; Chiome d'oro; Con che soavità; Interrotte speranze; Lettera amorosa; Tempio la cetra; Tirsi e Clori. Book 8 - Altri canti d'Amor; Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda; Dolcissimo usignolo; Lamento della Ninfa

Les Arts Florissants / Paul Agnew

Harmonia Mundi © HAF890 5278

(75' • DDD • T/t)



This third and final disc from Les Arts Florissants' cycle of madrigals by

Claudio Monteverdi is, in every way, a fitting end to their journey. Each disc has been organised by the cities in which Monteverdi worked: Cremona (Books 1-3), Mantova (4-6) and, now, Venice (7 & 8), presenting lesser-known gems alongside famous works.

And what a journey! Just compare the opening of this album to that of Vol 1 to grasp how far Monteverdi's dense, intense textures have expanded, and how the singers have grown with them. Take, for instance, the little-recorded 'Al lume delle stelle', where rising vocal phrases unfurl and look towards the stars as Tirsi is reminded of the glint in his lover's eyes. The phrasing is incredibly spacious and, even at its slowest, text is always the driving force, to the extent that one can almost taste it. In the solo madrigals, Miriam Allan's sublime singing in 'Con che soavità' is delicately imbued with a knowing glint. And in the extraordinary 'Lettera amorosa' Lucile Richardot finds a breathless immediacy quite different from Montserrat Figueras's long, languid opening phrases (Alia Vox, 2014) but equally engaging.

As the focus shifts to Book 8, the diaphanous singing of Hannah Morrison and Miriam Allan in 'Dolcissimo usignolo', in which Paul Agnew introduces voices in a sequential fashion, shows the remarkable balance of these performances. The disc ends with 'Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda', famous for its *stile rappresentativo*. Here I prefer a more imposing narrator and more closely miked instruments, such as found on record by Rinaldo Alessandrini (Naïve, 12/98), yet the vivid atmosphere of Agnew's performance is palpable and, as so often in these discs, his text-driven subtlety wins over.

Edward Breen

Mozart

'Whispering Mozart'

Abendempfindung, K523. Als Luise die Briefe, K520. An Chloë, K524. An die Bescheidenheit, K392. An die Einsamkeit, K391. An die Freude, K53. An die Freundschaft, K148/125h. An die Hoffnung, K390. Die betrogene Welt, K474. Daphne, deine Rosenwagen, K52/46c. Geheime Liebe, K150. Die ihr unermesslichen Weltalls Schöpfer ehrt, K619. Im Frühlingsanfang, K597. Komm, liebe Zither, K351. Das Lied der Trennung, K519. Sehnsucht nach dem Frühlinge, K596. Das Traumbild, K530. Das Veilchen, K476. Zaide - Brüder, lasst uns lustig sein. Der Zauberer, K472. Die Zufriedenheit, K473

Marianne Beate Kielland *mez*

Nils Anders Mortensen *pf*

LAWO Classics © LWC1111 (65' • DDD • T/t)



Let us get one thing clear. Despite the odd title there is no whispering on this

disc. The booklet promises performances of Mozart's Lieder that remain confined within their 'delicate and simple limits', as if the words are being intimately whispered in a salon, but what we hear is Mozart-singing not appreciably different in style from other singers of recent years - except, that is, for the distinctive beauty of Marianne Beate Kielland's voice.

While most Mozart Lieder discs have been recorded by sopranos or occasionally tenors, Kielland is a mezzo who can draw upon darker, more deeply rooted colours. In the simpler, strophic songs like 'An die Einsamkeit' and 'Im Frühlingsanfang' there is a bright surface to the voice that keeps heaviness at bay, and 'An die Freundschaft' especially benefits from her gleaming tone. As Mozart ventures towards greater complexity in the Lied, she is able to bring a deeper seriousness into play, giving weight to the heartfelt feelings of 'Das Lied der Trennung' and casting a shadow of grief over 'Abendempfindung' (how lovely, incidentally, was Elisabeth Grümmer in this song). In *Eine kleine Deutsche Kantate*, K619, after Nils Anders Mortensen's stately introduction, Kielland follows a grand opening recitative with a more flowing, warmly coloured main aria.

There is little or nothing here not to like. Those who prefer a high voice in their Mozart Lieder might turn to Barbara Bonney (Teldec, 1/92), who has an appealing lightness of touch. The classic disc casting a giant shadow over this repertoire is the pairing of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Walter Gieseking (EMI/Warner Classics, 2/56), and their Mozart

really is in a different style, mainly thanks to Schwarzkopf's gift for wringing the maximum import out of every phrase. Whisper it softly, but Kielland may be the safer choice. **Richard Fairman**

Poulenc

Ave verum corpus. Litanies à la Vierge Noire.

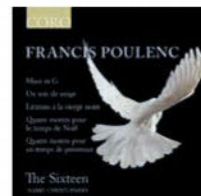
Mass. Quatre motets pour le temps de Noël.

Quatre motets pour un temps de pénitence.

Salve regina. Un soir de neige

The Sixteen / Harry Christophers

Coro © COR16149 (65' • DDD • T/t)



Any new recording from The Sixteen is going to be well worth hearing. It

almost goes without saying that the singing will be of a technical standard beyond reproach, while Harry Christophers's innate musicianship will ensure a performance of supreme artistic worth. This latest release does not disappoint. This is a sumptuous recording of flawless singing and intense music-making.

However, while this is a truly exquisite piece of choral singing, it almost seems too perfect. It's as if Poulenc's directness of expression and raw emotional impulses are filtered through a thick, highly polished veneer. In short, it misses the honesty and openness that are such potent features in the recent recordings from the Netherlands Chamber Choir and Tenebrae.

Despite the wonderfully vivid organ colours Robert Quinney adds to *Litanies à la Vierge Noire*, The Sixteen sound too comfortable and self-assured. Their singing of the *Motets pour le temps du Noël* is certainly unutterably lovely, yet at times it feels almost over-sung - the clarity of detail in 'Quem vidistis pastores' verges on the musically pretentious - and the warm, sultry tone they exude in *Un soir de neige* seems to look at Poulenc's desolate winter landscapes as if through a window while seated in front of a roaring log fire.

No reservations at all with the Mass, where they effortlessly negotiate Poulenc's difficult chromatic lines, articulate the delicate tracery of the widely separated pitches and cut a purposeful path through his thick, closely woven textures. The gloriously buoyant sopranos may not have quite the same sense of 'sweet joy' (to quote Poulenc's comment on the score) as James O'Donnell's Westminster choristers in the *Sanctus*, but the fullness of the choral sound is hard to beat and their rhythmically exhilarating *Gloria* is the stuff of dreams.

Marc Rochester



Les Arts Florissants and Paul Agnew finish their survey of Monteverdi's eight books of Madrigals on a high

Selected comparisons:

Westminster Cath Ch, O'Donnell

(6/94) (HYPE) CDA66664

Tenebrae, Short (10/10) (SIGN) SIGCD197

Netherlands Chbr Ch, Ericson (4/13) (GLOB) GLO5254

Purcell

'O Sing Unto the Lord'

Evening Hymn, Z193. Hear my prayer, O Lord, Z15. I was glad, Z19. Jehova, quam multi sunt hostes mei, Z135. Morning Hymn, Z198. O God, thou art my God, Z35. O sing unto the Lord, Z44. Remember not, O Lord, Z50. Te Deum, Z232. Voluntary, Z720

Saint Thomas Choir of Men & Boys, Fifth Avenue, New York; Concert Royal / John Scott
Resonus © RES10184 (54' • DDD • T)



When the organist and choirmaster John Scott died in 2015, aged just 59, he left the world of church music immeasurably the poorer. A former director of music at St Paul's Cathedral, Scott was employed until his death as the director of music at Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York. Now a recording he made with the church's choir of men and boys in 2010

has been released for the first time on Resonus – a posthumous reminder of Scott's living legacy in the many young musicians he trained throughout his career.

Indeed, what's most striking in these Purcell verse anthems is the quality of the treble singing. No surplus breath passes through a sound that has a lovely bladed focus – muscular and connected but never pushed so hard that it distorts or becomes raw. Combined with Scott's lively tempos and the stylish inflection of period ensemble Concert Royal, the result easily outdoes recordings by Christ Church, Oxford (Nimbus, 2/96) and King's College, Cambridge, though not quite 2012's 'My Beloved Spake' by Andrew Nethsinga and St John's, Cambridge (Chandos, 1/13), whose aural drama is greater, even if it comes occasionally at the expense of beauty.

Scott and his choir are at their best in the sprightly positivity of *O sing unto the Lord*, the D major *Te Deum* and *I was glad*, with its crisply dotted rhythms, but fall just a little short in *Hear my prayer*, *O Lord* and *Jehova, quam multi sunt hostes*. These broader emotional canvases feel just a little pinched in these tidy performances.

Alexandra Coghlan

A Scarlatti • Palestrina

Palestrina *Surrexit pastor bonus*. Tu es Petrus
A Scarlatti *Messa Clementina*. O magnum
mysterium. Salve regina

Le Parnasse Français / Louis Castelain
Paraty © PARATY316153 (51' • DDD • T/t)



Missa Clementina,
the first of Scarlatti's
Masses dedicated to
Pope Clement XI,

was composed in 1705; autograph material in the Vatican Library bears Cardinal Ottoboni's statement that the manuscript part-books were prepared especially for use at the Sistine Chapel. Written in five voice parts, increasing to seven in the *Agnus Dei*, Scarlatti moulded the *Missa Clementina* in the style of late-Renaissance polyphony, which is why Louis Castelain intersperses it with two Palestrina motets both apparently in the Sistine Chapel Choir's repertory at the same period (*Tu es Petrus* and *Surrexit pastor bonus*).

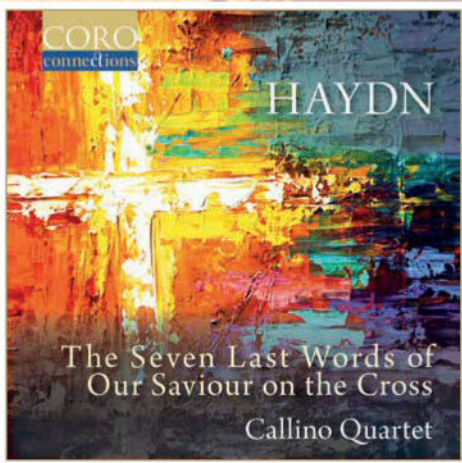
The choir of Le Parnasse Français use one solo voice per part, as research has revealed was the normal practice for the Pope's private chapel choir. The tenor line dominates a mite on occasion but the

CORO
connections

CORO

NEW ON CORO

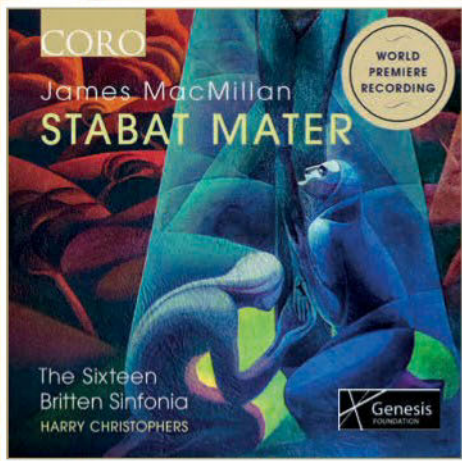
COR16152



Joseph Haydn: The Seven Last Words Callino Quartet

The award-winning Callino Quartet presents Haydn's *The Seven Last Words*, a work so deeply moving and contemplative that it has impassioned listeners in all its forms for over 200 years and was considered by the composer himself to be one of his greatest masterpieces.

COR16150



James MacMillan: Stabat mater

The Sixteen | Britten Sinfonia | Harry Christophers

Arguably one of the most powerful poems in the liturgy, James MacMillan's *Stabat mater* is a new and intensely personal work which encapsulates the power of the poem in a way no other composer has done to date. This recording features the artists who performed at the critically acclaimed world premiere at the Barbican in 2016.

'a masterpiece' theartsdesk.com

www.thesixteen.com



hazard chase

International classical music artist & project management

GRAMOPHONE AWARD-WINNING VOCAL ENSEMBLES



© BENJAMIN EALOVEGA

POLYPHONY

www.stephenlayton.com/polyphony



© ERIC RICHMOND

THE TALLIS SCHOLARS

www.thetallisscholars.co.uk



© DAVID SAMYN

VOX LUMINIS

www.voxluminis.com

Visit our website for full contact details and to see current artist and project lists.

www.hazardchase.co.uk



@hazardchaseltd



Hazard Chase Limited

ensemble's textural transparency, clarity of diction and sense of phrasing are of the highest order. Castelain's pacing and shaping are spot-on and his singers produce ample luminosity on open contrapuntal vowels without ever losing touch with the sense of the texts (for instance, listen to the fluidity, articulate beauty and holistic expressivity during the *Agnus Dei*).

Two other works for Rome in the 'ancient style' unveil some extraordinary harmonic surprises and deft uses of variety within a *cappella* textures: a penitential *Salve regina* might have been sung at thanksgiving services after earthquakes near Rome in early 1703, whereas an eight-voice *O magnum mysterium* was composed for Santa Maria Maggiore at Christmas 1705; Le Parnasse Français's spellbinding singing paints an image of Scarlatti's church music that is surprisingly close to the spirit of Lassus. **David Vickers**

Schubert

Winterreise, D911

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau bar Alfred Brendel pf

Video director Klaus Lindemann

Arthaus Musik © DVD 109 317 (73' + 56' • NTSC • 4:3 • PCM stereo • 0 • s)

Recorded live at the Siemensvilla, Berlin, 1979

Special feature: 'The Rehearsal'

Winterreise from TDK DVD DVWW-COWINT (9/06)



One of my musical regrets is that I never heard Fischer-Dieskau live in *Winterreise*. This DVD, made for German

television in 1979 and pairing arguably the two greatest Schubertians of their generation, is the next best thing. The recorded sound is hardly flattering, and the voice is balanced too closely vis à vis the piano. But I quickly adjusted. Familiar charges of over-intellectualisation or 'studiedness' seem more than usually impertinent after this engulfing, disturbing, ultimately cathartic performance. Fischer-Dieskau's voice – a shade lighter and more tenorish than in younger days – is in far finer condition than when he made his CD recording with Brendel a few years later. His breath control, enabling him to sing so many phrases in a single span where most singers take two, remains a miracle. He lives each phase of the wanderer's plight, too, in his telling but unexaggerated facial and bodily gestures. From the intermittent shots of the pianist, Brendel likewise suffers alongside him.

From the briskly tramping 'Gute Nacht', flickering between tender regret, stoicism

and fierce resentment, the performance seems to probe emotional extremes even more daringly than Fischer-Dieskau's numerous CD versions: say, in the hallucinatory, visionary quality he brings to the major-key verses of 'Der Lindenbaum'; the contrast between the frozen, eerie unreality at the opening of 'Einsamkeit' and the human anguish of the final page – here a miniature operatic scena of excruciating intensity; or his huge range of expression in the pivotal 'Der Wegweiser', from numb resignation, via violent protest, to horror (the singer's face crumpled in appalled realisation) as he confronts the 'road from which no man has ever returned'.

While I would have liked to hear more of him, Brendel's pianism is a model of rhythmic and textural clarity, and matches Fischer-Dieskau all the way in dynamic and colouristic range. Tempos are never allowed to sag, and not for a moment is there a whiff of self-indulgence. It's frustrating for Anglophone viewers that the generous rehearsal footage, moving chronologically through the cycle, has no subtitles. Even for German speakers, the microphones fail to pick up many of the brief exchanges between singer and pianist. What the rehearsal does confirm is that here is a true collaboration of equals, with the pair exchanging insights and suggestions over dynamic minutiae (say, in 'Frühlingstraum') and the precise timing and shaping of phrases. They constantly challenge each other to new levels of intensity. It's revealing that when rehearsing songs he has known for nearly four decades, Fischer-Dieskau sometimes articulates the text in a near-*Sprechgesang*. The finished performance indeed conveys a sense of heightened speech, yet with the words perfectly integrated into a singing line – the supreme challenge in performing *Lieder*. 'Not only a unique experience, but one to treasure for a lifetime' was Alan Blyth's verdict in his original *Gramophone* review. A decade on, I'd second that.

Richard Wigmore

Schütz

Symphoniae sacrae I

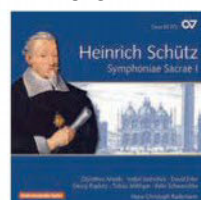
Dorothee Mields, Isabel Jantschek sops

David Erier counterten Georg Poplutz,

Tobias Mäthger tens Felix Schwandtke bass /

Hans-Christoph Rademann

Carus ® ② CARUS83 273 (91' • DDD • T/t)



It's only a year or so since I welcomed Schütz's third volume of *Symphoniae sacrae*

from these artists alongside a recording of the first volume from Weser-Renaissance Bremen under Manfred Cordes (Carus, CPO, 2/16). Here Hans-Christoph Rademann tackles that first volume himself, with very satisfying results. While the vocal requirements of the collection align it with the *Kleine geistliche Konzerte* of the following decade, the variety of instruments stipulated is far richer: plainly the absence of choral or polychoral pieces was a matter of choice rather than necessity (the depredations of the Thirty Years War are often cited as the reason behind the focus on smaller forces deployed in the *Kleine geistliche Konzerte*).

Be that as it may, since none of these pieces calls for more than three voices at once, Rademann dispenses with a choir altogether (one recalls that both Weser-Renaissance and Cantus Cölln favour single voices whatever the scoring), so that the principal difference in approach between Rademann and his current 'competitors' in the Schütz discography is virtually eradicated here (the only perceptible difference being the use of a male alto, which Manfred Cordes avoids). That said, Rademann's soloists are perhaps more engaging vocally than Cordes's, and more inclined to inflect lines in service of the meaning of the words (particularly, I suggest, the tenors: try the suggestion of percussion to illustrate 'in tympano' in *Jubilate Deo*, SWV276, which, while not over-egged, has more emphasis).

The sound image is also brighter and more detailed, so that the ear is more consistently tickled. The solo soprano selections in Cordes's set are worth hearing, and as my earlier review indicated, his is a fine account overall; but just as clearly I'm inclined to give Rademann the edge here. **Fabrice Fitch**

Sibelius · Kortekangas

Kortekangas Migrations^a

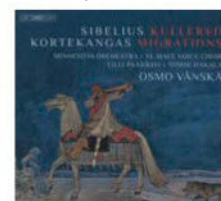
Sibelius Finlandia, Op 26. Kullervo, Op 7^b

^{ab}Lilli Paasikivi mez^bTommi Hakala bar^bYL Male

Voice Choir; Minnesota Orchestra / Osmo Vänskä

BIS ® ② BIS9048 (114' • DDD/DSD • T/t)

Recorded live at Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis, February 4-6, 2016



No choir on the planet has as much experience or affinity with *Kullervo* as the

YL Male Voice Choir and the ensemble proves as much here from the very first stanza of text in Sibelius's Op 7: the announcement of 'Ku-ller-vo', with its lightly

rolled 'r', and the twisting diphthong and *attacca* 'a' of 'poika'. The choir is bushy-tailed in 'Kullervo and his Sister' without sounding raucous – as good a litmus test as any – and clearly helped make this live performance in Minneapolis an event.

So what of the orchestra? I'd say Vänskä's Minnesota Orchestra is even more lustrous now than it was pre-lockout, particularly in its string sections (notice the textures around 5'30" in 'Kullervo's Youth'). As always, articulation is the watchword with Vänskä and you hear it everywhere, perhaps best of all in the contrasting orchestrations that underlie that repeating opening vocal 'Kullervo, Kalervon poika'. Vänskä knows what he wants to convey: a hopelessness from the start of 'Kullervo's Youth' that completely eludes Colin Davis and others; a demonic quality in 'Kullervo Goes to War' that underlines the thematic link with Stravinsky's *Petrushka* (never heard that before).

But ultimately, there's something about this *Kullervo* that underwhelms. It might be the soloists: Lilli Paasikivi's wonderful instrument sounds wayward and frequently sharp (she is no match for Paavo Järvi's Randi Stene, a personal favourite); Tommi Hakala doesn't bring the electrifying, hopeless brilliance to 'Voi poloinen' that Walteri Torikka did for Sakari Oramo at the 2015 Proms (couldn't Torikka have been given the chance to record it, given Hakala has before?). Oramo's performance was gripping from the start (even on the BBC's iPlayer) in a way that Vänskä's isn't. I am sure Vänskä will please those who view the piece more symphonically.

But what a joy it is to see this wonderful orchestra standing tall again – tall enough to commission a brand-new work to complement *Kullervo*, and for the same forces. But once more, care and thoughtfulness have paradoxically got in the way of the end result. Olli Kortekangas's *Migrations* was written to mark 150 years since the start of modern migration from Finland to North America (much of it to Minnesota). But while Kortekangas sniffed out the perfect poet in Sheila Packa, a Minnesotan of Finnish ancestry, her borderline naff and soundbite-based texts haven't pushed the composer into anything like *Kullervo*'s scale or impact. The piece feels far more stop-start (and short) than its sonic weight suggests it should.

The choral elements, for example, can sound lumbering and harmonically anaemic, as if the prescription of writing for male voices only has restricted Kortekangas rather than pushing him

to greater invention. Sometimes you get the feeling there's a fine piece lurking within some of the composer's more fertile ideas (the motif that controls the second interlude, for example), but that this, frustratingly, isn't it. The masterstroke – a sort of pining, twisting upwards on the concluding lines 'of wings that rise and fall / the circle of migration / in each flight / music that we breathe', to me a clear and telling refraction of the final pages of Sibelius's Fifth – is too little, too late. The vocally underpowered *Finlandia* that follows certainly doesn't compensate.

Andrew Mellor

Sullivan

Arabian Love Song. Bid me at least goodbye. Birds in the Night. County Guy. Edward Gray. E tu nol sai. Ever. Golden Days. Guinevere! Ich möchte hinaus es jauchzen. I wish to tune my quivering lyre. I would I were a king. Lied, mit thränen halbeschrieben. A life that lives for you. Love laid his sleepless head. Mary Morison. Nel ciel seren. None but I can say. Oh! ma charmante. O Israel. Old Love Letters. O mistress mine. Once again. Orpheus with his Lute. O swallow, swallow. Rosalind. Sad Memories. St Agnes' Eve. Sigh no more, ladies. Sweet day. Sweethearts. Tears, idle tears. What does little birdie say?. Where the bee sucks. The Willow Song. The Window, or The Songs of the Wrens
Mary Bevan *sop* **Ben Johnson** *ten*
Ashley Riches *bass-bar* **David Owen Norris** *pf*
 Chandos © 2 CHANI0935 (147' • DDD • T/t)



Sullivan's songs, like so much of his music away from his collaboration with Gilbert, have

largely vanished into obscurity, so this excellent set from pianist, composer and presenter David Owen Norris and three fine young British singers offers a much-needed reappraisal. Though it avoids a chronological approach in favour of groupings largely by writer, it covers Sullivan's entire career, from his 1855 schoolboy effort 'O Israel' to 'Tears, idle tears', written shortly before his death in 1900.

Sullivan took song composition seriously after his exposure to Lieder during his Leipzig years, and Schubert is a point of reference and departure throughout. His influence can be felt in the shaping of vocal lines and accompaniments, and, most importantly, in *The Window, or The Songs of the Wrens*, a song-cycle modelled on *Die schöne Müllerin* for which Tennyson provided the text. Sullivan's choice of poetry, not all of it in English, could be variable, but his natural gifts as a melodist

compel admiration even in songs that veer towards a now unfashionable sentimentality, such as his settings of Lionel H Lewin, a close friend, whose verses are apt to cloy.

Norris's singers reflect the directness of the music with a sincerity in performance that proves persuasive throughout. The vocal challenges are greater than some might suppose. Ben Johnson is occasionally pushed in his upper registers, while Ashley Riches sometimes reveals a vibrato when his voice is under pressure. Both of them, however, can also be utterly beguiling. Johnson sings *The Window* with discreet passion, brings wit and regret to 'O swallow, swallow' and plenty of swagger to his Italian serenades and gondola songs. Riches taps a vein of noble anguish in 'Edward Gray' and beautifully probes the emotional ambiguities beneath the urbanity of the Hugo setting 'O, ma charmante.'

Mary Bevan, meanwhile, is in glorious voice throughout. 'Orpheus with his Lute' is particularly exquisite, and her sense of line and floated high *pianissimos* are ravishing in 'O Israel'. She manages to make 'What does little birdie say' remarkably touching, despite Tennyson's dreadful poem. Yet there's also enough power in the voice to steer her through bigger numbers such as 'Guinevere!', written for Thérèse Tietjens, a notable Norma and *Trovatore* Leonora in her day. Norris is finely alert throughout to the stylistic shifts and complexities of Sullivan's piano-writing, as well as providing scholarly booklet-notes. They contain a hint that another set of Sullivan songs might be forthcoming: I eagerly await it, if so. **Tim Ashley**

Wert

'Divine Theatre - Sacred Motets'
 Amen, amen dico vobis. Ascendente Jesu in naviculum. Egressus Jesus. Deus iustus, et salvans. Gaudete in Domino. Hoc enim sentite in vobis. O altitudo divitiarum. O Crux ave, spes unica. Peccavi super numerum. Quiescat vox tua a ploratu. Saule, Saule. Virgo Maria hodie ad coelum. Vox in Rama audita est

Stile Antico

Harmonia Mundi © HMM80 7620
 (67' • DDD/DSD • T/t)



The Flemish-born composer Giaches de Wert (1535-96), famous for being Monteverdi's predecessor at Mantua, is perhaps best remembered today for his madrigals and the splendid motet *Vox in*



Stile Antico turn their attention to the emotional immediacy of Flemish-born composer Giaches de Wert

Rama. This album selects motets from books 2 and 3 (both printed in 1581), and elucidates a composer who skilfully blends formal polyphonic writing with the madrigalian arts.

Stile Antico also skilfully blend these two styles: in *Hoc enim sentite in vobis* the contrast between the stately first half and the impassioned second half may be more subtle than from Collegium Regale (Signum, 12/08) but it enhances the delicious setting of 'caelestium, terrestrium' (heaven and earth) as sopranos waft heavenwards. This is an important glimpse of Wert's genius for embedding striking word painting within the poignant and devout textures of sacred music. Importantly, the way Stile Antico accommodate these different modes with ease marks this album as special. They phrase with purpose and animate texts but never compromise their beautiful warm blend. Previously I have felt they overly prioritise poise at the expense of expressive irregularities, but here a crack in their conservative façade allows delicious moments to shine through.

The astonishingly vivid *Ascendente Jesu in naviculum*, which tells of Jesus

and his disciples at sea in a storm, probably best showcases Stile Antico's extrovert potential. Alongside this, a magnificent if rather statuesque performance of *Vox in Rama* offers a refined and sonorous approach characterised by the slow, soporific atmospheres that Stile Antico often favour in continental polyphony. It is testament to Wert's emotional immediacy that this album is one of their most engaging recordings: polyphony to grab one's attention rather than to carpet a devotional daydream.

Edward Breen

Wolf

'The Complete Songs, Vol 9:

Michelangelo Lieder and Early Songs'

Drei Gedichte von Michelangelo.

Sechs Gedichte von Scheffel, Mörike,

Goethe und Kerner. Sechs Lieder für

eine Frauenstimme. Auf dem See.

Erster Verlust. Der Fischer. Gretchen vor dem

Andachtsbild der Mater dolorosa. Sehnsucht.

Suszens Vogel. Die Tochter der Heide

Lydia Teuscher *sop* **Thomas Hobbs** *ten*

William Berger *bar* **Robert Holl** *bass*

Sholto Kynoch *pf*

Stone Records © 5060192 780673 (71' • DDD • T/t)



The newest volume of Stone Records' complete Wolf series mixes young and old,

early and late. Into the second category go the valedictory *Michelangelo Lieder*. In the first belong seven Goethe and Mörike settings plus two sets of six songs published, thanks to the financial support of Wolf's friend Friedrich Eckstein, in the late 1880s but dating from the previous decade.

All of them show Wolf's individual voice breaking through from the influence of Schubert and Schumann. There are several already masterful strophic songs (such as the beautiful 'Sehnsucht') and tastes of the characteristic sprightly mischief that would become such a hallmark for the composer.

And here too we largely have the young voices that have been the rule throughout the series. Thomas Hobbs brings a sweet, light, pleasingly plangent tenor tone to his assignments, and a lovely chaste, wide-eyed feel to 'Wanderers Nachtlied'. Lydia Teuscher sings brightly in her songs, but also creates a moving portrait in Wolf's

remarkable early Gretchen song. William Berger projects with firm focus, and perhaps a touch too much tension, but relaxes nicely into a touching account of 'Sehnsucht'.

Which leaves the veteran Robert Holl. He certainly can't be accused of tension, singing with relaxed grandeur and a weather-beaten gravitas that suits his moving, melancholy account of the *Michelangelo Songs* perfectly. He does rather chew at his words, and there's no disguising the wobble and occasional nasal quality of his tone, but his sheer authority and experience serve him well.

There's supremely musical and vividly characterful piano-playing from Sholto Kynoch throughout, and the recorded sound, though on the close side, is excellent. Another fine instalment.

Hugo Shirley

'Beneath the Northern Star'

'The Rise of English Polyphony, 1270-1430'

Alanus Sub Arturo plebs/Fons citharizancium/

[In omnem terram] **Anonymous** Alleluia:

Christo iubilemus. Ave mundi rosa. Credo –

Old Hall Manuscript No 74; No 90. Kyrie

Cuthberte prece. Spiritus et alme/Gaude

virgo salutata. Stella maris nuncuparis

Byttering En Katerine solennia/Virginalis

concio/[Sponsus amat sponsam]

Chirbury Agnus Dei **Damett** Salvatoris mater

pia/O Georgi Deo care/[Benedictus Mariae

Filius] **Dunstaple** Dies dignus/Demon dolens/

Iste confessor. Gloria **Excetre** Credo

Gervays Gloria **Power** Credo. Gloria

The Orlando Consort

Hyperion © CDA68132 (72' • DDD • T/t)

'Music for the 100 Years' War'

Alanus Sub Arturo plebs/Fons citharizancium/

In omnem terram **Anonymous** The Agincourt

Carol. Anglia tibi turbidas. Ave miles/Ave rex,

patrone/Ave rex gentis Anglorum. De flore

martyrum/Deus tuorum militum/[Ave rex gentis

Anglorum]. Ecce mitto angelum. Ianuam quam

clauserat/lacintus in saltibus/[Iacet granum].

Kyrie...Domine miserere – Ab inimicis nostris.

Opem nobis, o Thoma/Salve, Thoma/[Pastor

cesus]. Pastor cesus in gregis medio

Dunstaple Missa Da gaudiorum premia.

Preco prehemencie/Precursor premittitur/

Inter natos mulierum. Veni Sancte Spiritus/

Veni Creator Spiritus

Forest Ascendit Christus super celos/Alma

redemptoris mater. Gaude martyr/Collaudemus

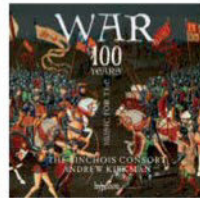
venerantes/[Celestium contemplator]

Power Credo 'Opem nobis, o Thoma'. Gloria

'Ad Thome memoriam'

The Binchois Consort / Andrew Kirkman

Hyperion © CDA68170 (77' • DDD • T/t)



Along with the Hilliard Ensemble and Gothic Voices, The Orlando and The Binchois Consorts have devoted a substantial proportion of their discographies to the music of the later English Middle Ages. That further offerings from them both should appear within a month of each other is cause for celebration, especially when so much is either new to the catalogue (on The Orlandos' disc especially) or presents some of the repertory's best-known pieces in a new light (The Binchois Consort). Although there is some chronological overlap between the two recitals, the only actual duplication concerns the 'singers' motet' *Sub Arturo plebs*, whose date of composition has recently been revised, bringing it into the orbit of the victor of Agincourt.

The Orlandos' disc, which covers some 150 years or so, is stylistically the more diverse. That follows logically but is compounded by the inclusion of some truly bizarre pieces that seem only marginally less weird in performance than on paper. The *Kyrie Cuthberte* is one; others include the Mass movements by Leonel Power at his more enigmatic. The Orlandos sensibly espouse the music's rough edges (as in the *Kyrie Cuthberte*), courting roughness themselves in a good cause. Where a more mellifluous tone is required, as in the top-voice-driven *Credo* by Excetre, they give Matthew Venner's expressive countertenor full rein. In general, the simpler chordal pieces are the most effective; the more intricate isorhythmic pieces are more uneven, in that the tenor part has not quite the solidity to anchor the interplay of the free voices above it, while the startling turns of Power's *Credo* might easily have packed more of a punch. The Dunstaple set provides an island of relative familiarity before two anonymous *Credos* round off the recital. In the second of these, the only four-voice piece of the disc, The Orlandos throw off the tentativeness occasionally discernible elsewhere and revel in its intricate textures.

The Binchois Consort's recital is more focused chronologically, dwelling on the brief reign of Henry V and the boyhood of his unhappy successor (in that sense this new disc is a close companion and sequel to their previous offering –

Hyperion, A/11). Its account of *Sub Arturo plebs* is more surefooted than The Orlandos', and in general they differentiate nicely between the different styles and registers. The rollicking *Agincourt Carol* sounds less pugnacious than from Gothic Voices all those years ago, more an outgoing expression of grateful thanksgiving; the two isorhythmic motets by Forest are as melodically felicitous as anything by Dunstaple, who himself is represented by works of the first importance: *Preco prebiminencie* and *Veni Sancte/Veni Creator* both featured in the Hilliard's marvellous anthology (and on a subsequent, scarcely less fine one from The Orlandos). The Binchois take both at a higher pitch and dispense with the doubled tenors that cast such a spell in the Hilliard anthology; as one steps out of its shadow, the virtues of Kirkman's approach reveal themselves (the tweaking of tempos for the middle sections is particularly effective).

Two anonymous motets in honour of St Thomas Becket are a seeming throwback to an earlier period, and are followed by three surviving movements of what must have been a complete Dunstaple Mass cycle (one of which has undergone substantial restoration). The concentration of Dunstaple's music is one of the disc's high points, worth the price of admission on its own: the second section of the *Kyrie* in particular shows off the understated eloquence of both composer and ensemble.

Two other memorable aspects are worth mentioning; first the startling Latin pronunciation in the English medieval manner, which renders familiar texts virtually unrecognisable at times, and which The Binchois carry off with no perceptible discomfort; second, the exquisite photographs of English alabaster carving that form a visual counterpart to the music recorded here. Each feature in its own way deepens one's apprehension of the culture that gave rise to it. **Fabrice Fitch**

'The Masque of Moments'

Anonymous The Bears' Dance. The Earl of Essex Measure. Lord Zouche's Maske. Les manches vertes. The Maypole. Robin. The Second of the Temple Antic. Steer hither, steer your winged pines. Tho' it may seem rude. Tom O'Bedlam **Bateman** The Cadua **Campion** Move now with measur'd sound. Now hath Flora robb'd her bow'rs **Coleman** Did not you once, Lucinda, vow **Coperario** Coperario. While dancing rests **Ferrabosco II** Why stays the bridegroom to invade **R Johnson** From the famous peak of Derby **Lanier** (attrib) I was not wearier **H Lawes** From the heav'ns now I fly.

Sweet Echo **W Lawes** Britannia triumphans – Sinfony. Cease, warring thoughts. The Last Song or Valediction. Of the Inns of Court Masque. Part of the King's Masque – Sinfony **Locke** Mercury and Nature in the Elysian Fields
Salisbury Cathedral Choir; Theatre of the Ayre
 Linn © CKD542 (71' • DDD • T)



The brainchild of lutenist Elizabeth Kenny, 'The Masque of Moments' draws

together songs, dances and ensembles from Campion, Johnson, Lawes and Locke, as well as anonymous works, into a brand new masque complete with its own narrative. It's a neat way of showcasing the 17th century's lesser-known composers in all their stylistic variety, and creates a programme capable of absorbing both the masque's artful and sophisticated lute songs (Lawes's 'Sweet Echo' and 'From the heav'ns now I fly') and the anti-masque's raucous 'Bears' Dance' and anonymous 'Tho' it may seem rude' (gamely West Country-fied by Giles Underwood).

Toured extensively as a concert programme back in 2007-08, this composite masque now belatedly arrives on disc, and it's all the better for having matured in the barrel for a decade. Kenny has assembled a crack team. The lute-playing (from David Miller, Jacob Heringman and Kenny herself) is, as you'd expect, gloriously skilful and varied in texture, stepping forwards for occasional virtuoso solos (the opening 'Lord Zouche's Maske', 'The Earl of Essex Measure'), and the violins switch from court to country tavern in a heartbeat, making rough magic of the many anonymous dances.

Soprano Sophie Daneman brings a career's worth of character to her contributions, and tenor Nicholas Mulroy balances Underwood's fruity comedy with some achingly refined melody-spinning. Teenage soprano Rosanna Wicks makes a striking debut with Lawes's 'Sweet Echo', sweetly unaffected and ornamented with filigree care. The Salisbury Cathedral trebles are an unexpected bonus, adding to the sense of genuinely collective, community music-making that gives this recording such personality and charm.

Alexandra Coghlan

'Orpheus' Noble Strings

Campion To music bent is my retired mind
Corkine Almaine. Come live with me, and be my love. Coranto. Down, down, proud mind.

Mounsiers Almaine. Prelude. Truth, trying time
Danyel Can doleful notes. Like as the lute delights. No let chromatic tunes.
 Time, cruel Time. Uncertain certain turns
Dowland Come away, come sweet love.
 Go nightly cares. Mr Dowland's Midnight.
 Prelude **Ferrabosco** Pavin **Holborne** Prelude
Hume Cease leaden slumber. Musickes delight.
 The virgines muse. What greater grief
Pilkington Music dear solace. Rest, sweet nymphs

Thomas Hobbs *ten* **Romina Lischka** *viols*

Sofie Vanden Eynde *lute*

Paraty © PARATY216229 (64' • DDD • T/t)



A day in the life of Orpheus – lutenist, lover and plaything of the gods – is the

elegant conceit behind this album of 16th- and 17th-century music for voice, lute and viol. In place of traditional booklet-notes for these songs, preludes and dances by William Corkine, John Danyel, Tobias Hume and others, we get a short narrative fantasy, stringing these works together into a musical account of Orpheus's life, from innocent shepherd songs ('Come live with me, and be my love') to his descent to hell after his lost Euridice ('Go nightly cares').

While musically this journey from youthful innocence to weary despair works well enough, it's a poor substitute for some context on pieces that are by no means repertoire staples. It's hard to spend an hour with this recording and not feel renewed admiration for Dowland, whose work (represented here by the smallest handful of his lesser-known songs) stands in such contrast to these pleasant but stylistically anonymous miniatures.

Thomas Hobbs, with his easy and androgynous English tenor, makes an appealing narrator for this musical tale, but it's the instrumental numbers that really excite. While Corkine may be an undistinguished song-writer, his astonishing music for solo viol – played with gloriously Romantic intensity and virtuosity by Romina Lischka – is as close as this instrument gets to the Bach Cello Suites. Has a solo viol ever sounded quite as operatic as it does here in Corkine's angst-filled *Almaine* or duetted as plaintively with a voice as it does in his 'Down, down, proud mind'? Lischka squeezes every ounce of emotion from works that fulfil a supporting role where they should be square in the spotlight.

Alexandra Coghlan

'Tides of Life'

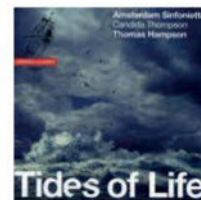
Barber Dover Beach, Op 3 **Brahms** Vier ernste Gesänge, Op 121 **Schubert** An die Leier, D737. Geheimes, D719. Memnon, D541. Ständchen, D920 (arr Bob Zimmermann)^a **Wolf** Italian Serenade. Anakreons Grab. Auf einer Wanderung. Fussreise. Der Rattenfänger

Thomas Hampson *bar*

^a**Netherlands Female Youth Choir;**

Amsterdam Sinfonietta / Candida Thompson *vn*

Channel Classics © CCS38917 (55' • DDD • T)



This album reflects a tour undertaken by Thomas Hampson and the Amsterdam

Sinfonietta, for which several new string-orchestra arrangements of songs were commissioned from David Matthews. Its title, an interview with both Hampson and the orchestra's artistic director, Candida Thompson, tells us, aims to capture the sense of the 'ebbs and flows of one's life' they feel defines the programme; whatever the case, it makes for an enjoyable and often beguiling disc.

Reactions to the arrangements themselves will likely come down to personal taste, though. Several of Matthews's treatments feel reasonably straightforward – and he certainly doesn't go in for full-scale 'recomposition' – but there are times when the string orchestra sound just feels a little genteel: it can take some of the acerbic edge off the Wolf and can give the Schubert a slight Bierdermeier veneer.

Wolf's 'Anakreons Grab' and the spiky 'Der Rattenfänger' are terrific, though, the latter showing real imagination in exploiting the whole timbral range of the strings. Schubert's D920 'Ständchen' (to Grillparzer's text, although the poorly edited booklet confuses it with the Rellstab setting from *Schwanengesang*) is given in Bob Zimmermann's 2015 arrangement; it, too, is a delight.

I was less convinced by Brahms's *Four Serious Songs*, where the string colours seem inherently lighter and less autumnal than those of a brooding Steinway. Here, too, the lightness of Hampson's voice, which has lost a fair amount of its juice and honey over the years, is another factor. The characteristic intelligence and sensitivity are very much in evidence, though, which help make 'Dover Beach' a touching final track.

The playing of the Amsterdam Sinfonietta is brilliantly alive and responsive throughout, and their witty, rapier-sharp performance of Wolf's *Italian Serenade* is guaranteed to raise a smile. Channel Classics' engineering is immaculate. **Hugo Shirley**

REISSUES

Peter Quantrill on two huge Mstislav Rostropovich sets; **Rob Cowan** recalls Pierre Fournier; **Bryce Morrison** marvels at the sheer artistry of pianist Sviatoslav Richter

A master musician

Mstislav Rostropovich's impact on music remains unequalled

A recent BBC film surveyed 'Classic Cellists' of the last century. As the credits rolled, Mstislav Rostropovich brought the *Rococo* Variations to a finish of extraordinary élan. There was, so it seemed at the time, nothing left to say. This was as good as cello-playing gets.

In his preface to **Rostropovich: Cellist of the Century**, Yo-Yo Ma remembers a sleepless night after his first encounter with Rostropovich playing the First Concerto of Shostakovich, and he can't have been the only aspiring cellist to feel likewise. As a teenager he would have been listening to the CBS premiere recording with Ormandy rather than either version in this lavish

Rostropovich commissioned in bulk and left history to sort the gold from the dross

tribute from Warner Classics, but the point holds. Particularly in the quarter-century between his first appearance in the West and his semi-permanent exile there from 1974, before the status of World Statesman conferred upon him, Rostropovich was simply the most thrilling cellist of his generation.

Every cello recording he made for EMI, Erato, Teldec and Warner Classics is in the box. He was responsible, Steven Isserlis once wrote, 'for more great works being written than any performing musician in history,' and they are nearly all here. Principal among them are the works of Prokofiev, Shostakovich and Britten explored by Michael McManus in last month's cover-story, but Rostropovich commissioned in bulk and left history to sort the gold from the dross. When the pan is shaken, how the concertos of Dutilleux, Lutosławski and Jolivet

shine: often for staying true to their own language while finding ways to write against the expectation of how a piece for Rostropovich should behave (in Lutosławski's case, by giving the soloist nothing but open Ds for the first minute before plunging into a combat which could be fought with special empathy by one who, like the composer, had suffered personally from an authoritarian contest of no winners and, at the time of composition and recording, no relief).

Perhaps flattered by the commission, Landowski, Gagneux, Moret, Penderecki and still others fell into the trap of writing for Rostropovich as a guardian of 'Soul' – Russian or otherwise – with a great deal of high-lying, high-minded soliloquy which to these Anglo-Saxon ears strains after profundity. Soviet-era concertos by Knipper, Boris Tchaikovsky and Tishchenko are stronger and more sharply profiled than late-career offerings from Shchedrin, Schnittke and Gubaidulina. A nadir of indulgence is reached with Alexander Knaifel's *Make me drunk with your kisses*, from which the pastoral *Romanza* of David Matthews emerges as sweet relief even if Rostropovich sounds off-colour (recorded live at Buckingham Palace, naturally).

But then Rostropovich was a man it was impossible to say no to. The *Andante cantabile* of Myaskovsky's Second Sonata issues an unrefusable invitation to listen in wonder (why shouldn't this be a staple for Romantically inclined cellists?) remembering that this was the controversial choice he made for his graduation work. Sonata-playing with Alexander Dedyukin (Chopin Rachmaninov, Brahms) especially brings to mind Clive James's metaphor for listening to the Russian language, 'like being hugged by a bear wearing a fur-trimmed brocade



dress-gown.' Not everything survives the embrace. He rather squeezed the life out of Schumann's Concerto; his full-bore vibrato quickly overpowers Italian Baroque concertos from 1992 and a cello-and-organ recital recorded with Herbert Tachezi the following year at St Giles Cripplegate

Part of the fun of these boxes lies in setting Rostropovich against himself in the central repertoire, where reactions are largely determined by both the age and quality of the recording and the calibre of his partners. I hope cockeyed jingoism isn't at work in my (quite strong) preference for his 1960s versions of the concertos by Dvořák (with Boult), Prokofiev, Saint-Saëns and Myaskovsky (Sargent) over remakes with Giulini, Karajan and Ozawa.

No: from the same decade come a Brahms Double with Szell and *Don Quixote* with Kondrashin; they too brim with the character that his masterclass teaching inculcated. There are accounts of him pulling a student's hand away from the fingerboard before a solo. 'Don't prepare the audience,' he told them. 'Once in a while you'll miss the note but you'll always tell the story.' In the sparring, pleading and reconciliation of the Double Concerto, with Oistrakh as Joachim and Rostropovich as Hausmann (playing Brahms), this narrative impulsiveness is harnessed and encouraged by Szell where, a decade later, Perlman and Haitink make a congenial but self-contented partnership.

The **Complete Recordings on Deutsche Grammophon** paints a more complete portrait of a musician who was (or became) much more than a solo cellist. On the rostrum he is a discreetly positive presence (rather as Boult and Sargent were for him in former years) while the Russian National Orchestra accompany their founder Mikhail Pletnev, at his most dazzling (though not so mercurially wayward) in the third concertos of Prokofiev and Rachmaninov.

At the piano his touch is unexpectedly gentle and yielding when accompanying his wife Galina Vishnevskaya in two discs of



As good as cello-playing gets: two box-sets celebrate Mstislav Rostropovich

Russian song, giving touching justification to the couple's claim to Claude Samuel that each understood the other, musically as well as personally, better than anyone else. Even in the pit his work on *Tosca* with the Orchestra National de France (especially strings, swooning and sizzling to order) can be heard as a love-letter to Vishnevskaya: boomily recorded, lent true *verismo* by the committed contributions of Franco Bonisolli (Cavaradossi) and Matteo Managuerra (a young and unhinged Scarpia), catching a vivid snapshot of the central character as wilful, impossible not to love and hardly less in control of her destiny than Callas's embodiment of the central part.

If *The Queen of Spades* (made the following year) does not scale the same heights, at least the conductor's coaxing of a Classically airy and piercing sound world from the orchestra – as if Turgenev's prose had grown wings of song – may be savoured. The modulated brass of the Berlin Philharmonic (more Tchaikovsky, the ballet suites and *Capriccio Italien*) could hardly sound more different. The National Symphony Orchestra of Washington make a happier fit with Rostropovich's

own temperament in Prokofiev (*Romeo and Juliet* suites) and Shostakovich (Fifth Symphony) without rivalling the polish and brilliance of London Symphony Orchestra in their late concerts together, including a complete and unforgettably theatrical *Romeo and Juliet* which, one hopes, does not only live on in the memory.

Several Melodiya recordings find their way into the DG box on the (slightly spurious) grounds that they were issued in the West by the Westminster label, which is now owned by Universal. They feature another breakneck *Dance of the Elves* with Dedyukin (there are already two such in the Warner box), and chamber music-making (Haydn and Beethoven trios, the Piano Quartet of Fauré) with Kogan, Gilels and Barshai which even rivals for intuitive sympathy the Beethoven sonatas recorded for Philips with Richter (Rostropovich recalled how the two of them would take time to breathe together offstage, then walk on and begin playing without even looking at each other).

Best of all among the Westminster recordings is Schubert's String Quintet with the Taneyev Quartet. Long elusive on CD, freshly remastered though without the

body or tonal range of the Eurodisc LP on my shelves, this mighty handful undertakes a winter journey to the outer ranges of the quintet's expression like no other version I know. Rostropovich joins the Melos and Emerson ensembles on later DG versions where the unrelenting momentum of the last two movements is softened by a weary *Gemütlichkeit*.

The conductor of those BBC-filmed *Rococo Variations* (happily available in full on an ICA Classics DVD) was Benjamin Britten, and the DG set makes clear that he was the other half of Rostropovich's most fruitful relationship with a non-Russian musician. A breathtakingly nimble Haydn C major Concerto is more subtly voiced and joyfully explored than the self-directed later recording in the Warner set. Rostropovich admitted unease in a studio environment and its requirement for 'the same again but perfect', but perhaps the contrasting reserve of a certain school of English musicians brought out the best in him (Donald Mitchell retold for Humphrey Carpenter's book how the cellist necked whisky and devoured fruit before he and Britten, somewhat horrified, went off to rehearse together). At any rate, their Decca-made sonatas of Debussy, Bridge and Britten himself are balanced by the Decca engineers to capitalise on the rapport of creative equals. The central Serenade of the Debussy is a three-minute miracle: touched by the cellist's magic with high harmonics, conjuring a grotesque parade of clowns and trapeze artists like the lines of Baudelaire that inspired both Dutilleux and Britten.

Original covers are an attractive feature of both boxes, but the Warner set is more than another shelf-filling reissue thanks to a cloth-bound, hardback book. Claude Samuel and Elizabeth Wilson probably talked with Rostropovich and saw him in action more than any other European writers; they contribute insider essays alongside an extended, beautifully reproduced photo-history and a list of commissions and premieres. To the cellist is given the last word, in a late recorded interview of memoirs, then reciting the *Chant pour Slava* of symbolist poet Louis Aragon: 'You devil of music, you / Son of courage and madness / I salute you Slava, thanks to whom perhaps not all beauty is denied me.' **Peter Quantrill**

THE RECORDINGS

Mstislav Rostropovich Cellist of the Century
Warner Classics © (40 discs + three DVD)
9029589230

Mstislav Rostropovich Complete Recordings
on Deutsche Grammophon
DG © (37 discs) 479 6789

Azrieli Music Prizes

Recognizing excellence in new Jewish Music

The Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music – \$50,000

An opportunity to create a new work • Application Deadline: May 7, 2017

The Azrieli Prize for Jewish Music – \$50,000

An opportunity to celebrate a recent work • Application Deadline: November 5, 2017

Both winning submissions to be performed and recorded Fall 2018

Open call • No submission cost

www.azrielifoundation.org/music



Classics Direct

Gramophone Choice Recordings

Disc of the month

Bach J S	Ouvertures	Ensemble Zefiro, Bernardini	£12.50
Bach J S	Goldberg Variations	Beatrice Rana	£10.00
Bach J S #	St Matthew Passion (2CD)	Gilchrist, Gardiner	£15.50
Brahms	Works for Solo Piano Vol. 4	Jonathan Plowright	£11.00
Glass	Piano Works	Víkingur Ólafsson	£11.00
Matthews	Piano Trios	Leonore Piano Trio, Rosefield	£12.00
Mozart	Violin Sonatas Vol. 3	Ibragimova, Tiberghien	£11.00
Mozart	Arias	Anett Fritsch, de Marchi	£11.50
Puccini	Turandot (DVD)	Stemme, La Scala, Chailly	£14.50
Strauss R	Metamorphosen, Symphonia Domestica	Roth	£11.50
	From Melba to Sutherland (4CD)	Australian Singers	£17.00
	Music for the 100 Years' War	Binchois Consort	£11.00

Recent Recommended Releases

Beethoven	Piano Concertos 1 & 2 (SACD)	Sudbin, Vänskä	£11.00
Bruch	String Quartets & Octet	Nash Ensemble	£11.00
Elgar	Symphony No.1 (SACD)	BBC SO, Gardner	£11.00
Franck	Szymanowski & Fauré	Tasmin Little, Lane	£11.00
Haydn	The Seven Last Words	Callino Quartet	£11.50
Haydn	The Seasons (2CD)	Sampson, McCreesh	£19.00
Pergolesi	Stabat Mater + Bach BWV54 + 170	Crowe, Bates	£11.50
Pettersson	Symphony No.14 (SACD+DVD)	Lindberg	£11.00
Rachmaninov	Piano Concerto 3 + Medtner 2	Hamelin, Jurowski	£11.00
Sousa	A Sousa Celebration (SACD)	RSNO, K. Järvi	£11.00
Vaughan Williams	Symphonies Nos.3 & 4	RLPO, Manze	£11.50

Free Monthly New Release & Special Offer Listings

We accept payment by Cheque / Visa / MasterCard

Postal Charges UK - First item £1.50, then £0.50 per item Box Sets £3.00
Maximum UK postage charge = £3.00

Europe - First CD £2.00, then £1.00 per disc Box Sets from £2.50

Outside Europe at cost Prices valid until 31.05.17 and include VAT at 20%
Office Hours Monday - Saturday 9.00am - 5.00pm Answerphone on Wednesdays

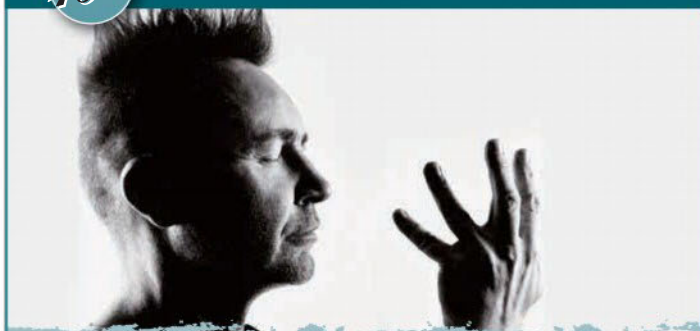
Orders: 01787 882223 Classics Direct

91 North Street, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 1RF. UK E-mail: sales@classicsdirect.co.uk
www.classicsdirect.co.uk to view our special offer listings

PERTH FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

46th

15th - 27th May 2017



Nigel Kennedy
Nicola Benedetti
Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra & Freddy Kempf
English Touring Opera *Tosca*
Tenebrae
Jools Holland & His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra
Marcus Brigstocke
Justin Currie
Martin Taylor and Alison Burns
Treacherous Orchestra
ArTay and much more

Box Office at 01738 621031 www.perthfestival.co.uk

Listening to a set such as this **Pierre Fournier Edition** both uplifts and depresses me. The uplifting aspect is very easy to explain: Pierre Fournier's playing embraces his chosen repertoire with a humbling degree of love and perception, his technical equipment, at least up to and a little beyond his prime, fully capable of translating some deeply musical impulses into performance terms. Fournier was a true artist and for his sake I'll lift my self-imposed ban, in the context of discussing music, on the word 'aristocratic', so often meaningless, just as I would for the cellist Emmanuel Feuermann and the violinists David Oistrakh, Arthur Grumiaux and Henryk Szeryng (more of him later). All five musicians achieve their aims by refusing to overstate the case yet each manages to convey the essence of what they play with agile, flexible and tonally rich performances.

So much for the uplifting aspect. What depresses me is a sneaking suspicion that in some respects my love of Fournier's art is in part a generational issue, a preference for his veiled tone, aching vibrato (always varied), subtle use of *portamento* and wistful phrasing that spell 'true romantic' in every bar. That's me to a T and I suspect that not a few *Gramophone* readers would concur. But I'm now long enough in the tooth to be honest and I certainly mean no disrespect to the many wonderful cellists who are currently performing if I say that for me Fournier was one on his own. No one nowadays sounds quite like him.

There can be little doubt that this beautifully produced set tells it as it is. Before I offer a brief summary of the major items programmed I should point out that with Fournier 'comparative' listening is hugely complex because outside of the recordings gathered here are countless others, often of the same repertoire (and frequently taken from radio broadcasts) that although well worth pursuing are too varied and numerous to reference comprehensively, so I'll reluctantly cast them aside.

As to the current collection you need only play the Beethoven Triple Concerto with violinist Wolfgang Schneiderhan, pianist Géza Anda and Ferenc Fricsay conducting to confirm Fournier's



An 'aristocratic' cellist: Pierre Fournier's complete DG, Decca and Philips recordings

credentials as a great chamber musician: once heard, his warmth and restraint at the start of the slow movement can never be forgotten and the rapport with his colleagues is a joy to encounter. Concerning the two versions of Strauss's

There can be little doubt that this beautifully produced set tells it as it is

Don Quixote, I was amused to observe that for the original LP sleeves Karajan's Berlin version prints the conductor's name in a point size that's roughly three times larger than the soloist's whereas for the recording with the Clemens Krauss and the Vienna Philharmonic, the opposite is true. Musically, the evidence matches the presentation, with Fournier probing inwards more effectively for Krauss, especially in 'Don Quixote's Vigil'. Berlin and Vienna are also the venues for Dvořák's Concerto, this time the BPO version under George Szell making more of an impact than its worthy VPO predecessor under Rafael Kubelík.

Brahms's cello sonatas are represented no less than three times, initially with Wilhelm Backhaus, Fournier there pitting his customary tonal 'purr' against Backhaus's bright, buoyant phrasing; then Rudolf Firkušný, who offers warmth, grandeur and

a like musical mind, Fournier on equally good form (this would be my preferred version); and lastly, a recording from the 1980s with Fournier's pianist son Jean Fonda, always forceful and assertive, though by now although the older Fournier can still attack the note with plenty of gusto, he can't sustain it as effectively as he once could. Earlier recordings with Fonda of music by Franck, Schubert, Mendelssohn and Schumann are infinitely better.

Beethoven's complete works for cello and piano are represented twice: the earlier set with Friedrich Gulda, the later one with Wilhelm Kempff. Interesting that when it comes to the A major Sonata Op 69 the long first-movement repeat is played only by the Fournier/Gulda partnership. The duo with Kempff seems at times rather formal, the older pianist keeping his essentially lyrical colleague on a tighter

expressive reign than does Gulda: for me, it's the preferable recording. However, the complete Beethoven piano trios with Henryk Szeryng and Kempff are uniformly superb, the balance between players, patient tempos and sense of musical interplay, all make for readings that illuminate every aspect of this wonderful music.

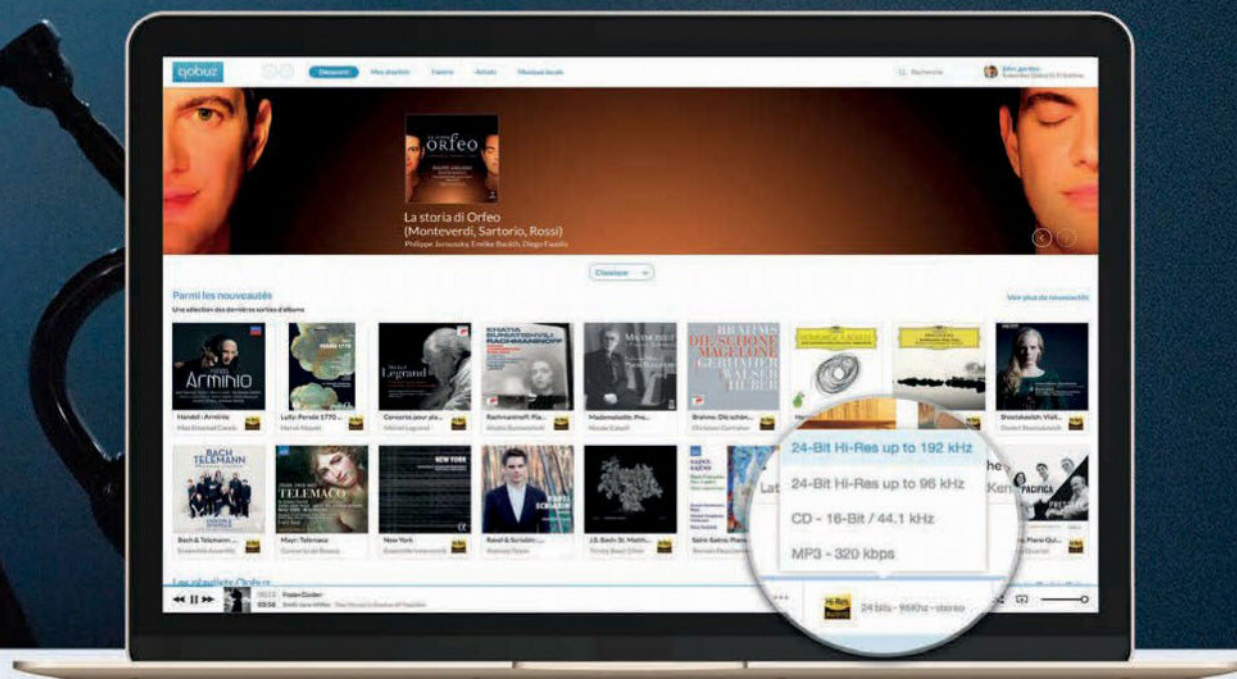
Of the two recordings with the Berlin Philharmonic under Alfred Wallenstein, Bloch's *Schelomo* resonates with Feuermann's influence and while Elgar's Concerto is beautifully played the performance, again under Wallenstein, doesn't quite gain access to the work's soul. Concertos by Lalo and Saint-Saëns (his First) under Martinon are classics of their kind; there are concertos by Haydn and Boccherini and various Baroque masters (some of the in alternative versions) and sundry shorter pieces. So what have I forgotten? Ah yes! Bach's six cello suites, unforgettable performances – incidentally discussed in February's 'Classics Reconsidered' (page 100) – and proof beyond doubt that Pierre Fournier was among the last century's very greatest cellists. A fabulous set. **Rob Cowan**

THE RECORDING

The Pierre Fournier Edition Complete Recordings on DG, Decca and Philips DG © (25 discs) 479 690-9

We are reinventing streaming

DISCOVER THE NEW QOBUZ



We both cherish freedom of choice

Your taste in music is not the same as everyone else's. Neither is ours. We structured and organized our 30-million-track catalogue for you to dive into it. Our team of experts also works every day to curate, document, and cherry-pick what is really interesting both in new releases and in the discography culture.

The Qobuz sound: Uncompromised quality of sound

First and foremost, we offer music in the best condition possible. Our new app for PC/Mac is seamlessly integrated to your HI-FI ecosystem.



Hi-Res Audio certified by the Japan Audio Society. Enjoy Qobuz using the biggest HI-FI brands.

Our day-to-day differences

We offer to tell you more about the music you love. The editorial content that our team of experts creates every day is completely exclusive. Discover the taste of Qobuz across all genres: playlists, articles, interviews.

1 MONTH OF FREE*

MUSIC STREAMING

Visit www.qobuz.com/gramophone



Qobuz, unlimited music streaming for demanding music lovers.
30 million tracks in unequalled sound quality.
The most extensive Hi-Res catalogue: 60 000 tracks in Hi-Res.



* offer available only for new subscription until 30/05/17. More information on www.qobuz.com/legal-terms

Richter, who was Richter? The question is outwardly absurd concerning an iconic musician, one seen as a pianist of both super-human strength and flights of the imagination known to few. But Sviatoslav Richter was multi-faceted and unpredictable; a true enigma. His long-awaited appearances in New York and London after virtual incarceration in Russia were heralded by descriptions – most notably from Emil Gilels and Julius Katchen – of a transcendental genius capable of eclipsing all possible rivals. Such praise aroused wild expectations and although Richter's stature was never in doubt it inevitably led to fraught and uneven results. At his greatest in Haydn and Prokofiev, his Chopin was of a strangely remote, indeterminate nature while his famous (infamous?) slow tempo in Schubert's B flat Sonata led one critic to speak of a 'Chinese water torture'.

Later, Richter's always uncertain temperament stabilised and the concerts that followed left an indelible memory on all who heard them. Yet, unlike such celebrated colleagues as Horowitz and Rubinstein, expectations were often confounded. He defied definition. Pin him down and he would walk away with the pin. Matchless delicacy alternated with an elements rage often within a single work. He was the Florestan and Eusebius of pianists taken to a frightening extreme. Again, he was in the long term more awe-inspiring than lovable. Somehow you were made conscious of a dark sun, a sense of both negation and a life-affirming light.

And so to Warner Classics' tribute to this great, if baffling, pianist. Many of Richter's finest performances have appeared on a wide variety of labels (I am thinking principally of Schubert's 'Unfinished' C major Sonata, Schumann's *Blunde Blätter*, Ravel's *Miroirs*, the whole of the 1958 Prague recital, with its incomparable Liszt and, perhaps most of all, Szymanowski's Second Sonata, pirated from a 1959 Moscow recital). Yet Warner Classics provides ample food for thought. Richter's Schumann *Fantasie* ranges far and wide with an extraordinary sense of the composer's romantic volatility and, in the finale, an evocation of music once described by Andrew Porter as being like so much 'shifting sunset vapour'. The rhetorical grandeur of Tchaikovsky's



Unique, a colossus and an enigma: Sviatoslav Richter

First Concerto is played up to the hilt and there is a pulverising attack on the neo-Bach figurations of Bartók's Second Concerto. He makes it difficult to imagine a more lucid way with Beethoven's *Tempest* Sonata, and there is a joyful letting down of hair in the Schubert *Trout* Quintet, all hypertension and a driven quality forgotten. On the other hand, there is a suitably manic urgency in the Schumann G minor Sonata (with its instructions 'as fast as possible ... faster ... still faster') complemented by a rare intimacy in the *Andantino*'s dreamscape.

His repertoire was eclectic with a tendency to selections rather than complete cycles

Richter, through long experience with his wife, the singer Nina Dorliak, was an inspired musical partner to Fischer-Dieskau. Fisher-Dieskau may have given him a hard time in Hugo Wolf (see Bruno Monsaingeon's superb film) but even that great singer must have celebrated a pianist who in Brahms's *Die schöne Magelone* was happy to maintain a balance of equals (Fischer-Dieskau was later disturbed by what he saw as a preening egotistical side to his single partnership with Horowitz). Hear the sustained ecstasy in 'Ruhe, Süßliebchen, im Schatten' and you will

be reminded of Fischer-Dieskau's delight in so many of his collaborators, in Gerald Moore, Jörg Demus, Alfred Brendel and, perhaps most of all, in Sviatoslav Richter.

My awe and celebration leave little room for a more critical stance. But hearing Richter's Mozart recalls his self-confessed problem. His way with the Concerto in C, K503, is oddly open-ended. Here, to quote, Shakespeare's Richard III he is 'not in the giving mode'. Similarly, in K482 the manner is strangely neutral (neutered?); these are not the sort of performances to lift the spirits. There is a provoking stiffness, too, in Brahms's Second Concerto. Where is the forward thrust that launches the *Allegro appassionato* and is the final *Allegretto* a glory of tumbling gaiety?

Yet if such reservations are spots on the sun they underline the disjunct if enthralling nature of a pianist who could happily turn *allegretto* into *presto* (the finale of Beethoven's Op 54 Sonata) or *allegretto* into *andante* (Op 14 Sonata). The *molto moderato* opening of Schubert's G major Sonata edges perilously if hypnotically towards *lento*. Such things occurred very much as the mood took Richter. His repertoire was vastly eclectic (I recall an unforgettable National Gallery recital of Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Webern, Szymanowski, Bartók and Hindemith) with a tendency to selections rather than complete cycles. It is hard to imagine Richter exclaiming 'You see, I just adore life' (Rubinstein) and he could show his critical talons (on Pollini, 'well-developed biceps – Chopin cast in metal'). He could also be mischievous and disarming ('I'm the most normal person you could imagine ... perhaps I might have wanted to be mad. It's always like that'). That he ended with a pained declaration – 'The trouble is, I don't like myself' – tells of a divided nature hardly surprising when you consider biographical considerations. Richter was unique and a colossus; he was also an enigma wrapped in an enigma.

Bryce Morrison

THE RECORDING

Sviatoslav Richter

Complete HMV and Teldec Recordings
Warner Classics © (24 discs) 9029593016

Opera



Richard Wigmore listens to Sonya Yoncheva's Handel:

'Her rich lyric soprano, reminiscent of the young Angela Gheorghiu, is a beautiful instrument' ► **REVIEW ON PAGE 112**



Andrew Mellor embraces a Norwegian Hermaphrodite:

'Much of the music is so physical that dance and movement fill your mind's eye (and ear) involuntarily' ► **REVIEW ON PAGE 116**

Bizet

Les pêcheurs de perles

Diana Damrau *sop.*.....Leïla
Matthew Polenzani *ten.*.....Nadir
Mariusz Kwiecien *bar.*.....Zurga
Nicolas Testé *bass-bar.*.....Nourabad
Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra /
Gianandrea Noseda

Stage director **Penny Woolcock**

Video director **Matthew Diamond**

Erato © **DVD** 9029 58936-1; © **BD** 9029 58936-0
 (120' • NTSC • 16:9 • 1080i • DD5.1 & PCM stereo •
 O • S/s). Recorded live, January 16, 2016



In this performance from the New York Met, a co-production with English National Opera, the setting is not Ceylon

in ancient times. We are in present-day Sri Lanka: a shanty town on the sea shore, the costumes a mixture of traditional and modern. The English director, Penny Woolcock, has made the sea what she calls the opera's fourth leading figure. As the storm breaks at the end of Act 2, towering waves seem to threaten the very existence of the community, perhaps an allusion to the tsunami of 2004. This is very effective, but even more breathtaking (pun not intended) is the video projection during the Prelude: three (live) divers gracefully swimming in the blue depths, complete with realistic bubbles.

The action opens with a lively, nervy chorus, the tenors rather stretched by the high tessitura of the slower middle section. The entry of Zurga and his election as leader are swiftly followed by the unexpected arrival of the long-absent Nadir. The latter's account of his exploits, and a reprise of the chorus, are followed by the famous 'Au fond du temple saint', where Nadir and Zurga recall how they both fell in love with a beautiful girl at a shrine in Kandy. This led to their falling out; now they celebrate the renewal of their friendship. Significantly – because, unbeknown to Zurga, Nadir is actually pursuing their 'goddess' – they stand

apart till the end of the duet. Matthew Polenzani and Mariusz Kwiecien sing euphoniously, perhaps a little matter-of-factly. Jussi Björling and Robert Merrill it ain't. Traditionalists will be glad to know that the inauthentic reprise of the big tune is retained.

When a veiled woman arrives to pray for the pearl fishers, Nadir recognises her: it is Leïla, the cause of the quarrel with his friend. Polenzani sings 'Je crois entendre encore' soulfully, culminating in a beautifully floated top C. Diana Damrau is lightness itself in her song to the gods and spirits that turns into an acknowledgement of love. Later, introduced by romantic horn-calls, she sings a rhapsodic 'Comme autrefois dans la nuit sombre'. Bizet's storm music when the lovers are discovered is not very inspired, but Gianandrea Noseda gets vivid singing and playing from the chorus and orchestra.

Zurga's 'tent' in Act 3 is an office: filing cabinets, files everywhere, laptop, fridge, a television set. Kwiecien is superb in an impassioned 'O Nadir, tendre ami', though the effect is not enhanced by his lighting a cigarette at the end. The original conclusion is restored, Zurga not dying but watching the flames of the fire that he started to allow the lovers to escape. The opera is no masterpiece, but this production should win it many new friends. **Richard Lawrence**

Braunfels

Ulenspiegel

Marc Horus *ten.*.....Till Ulenspiegel
Christa Ratzenböck *mez.*.....Nele
Joachim Goltz *bar.*.....Provost
Hans Peter Scheidegger *bass.*.....Klas
Andreas Jankowitsch *bar.*.....Jost/Cobbler
Tomas Kovacic *ten.*.....Mayor/First Pardonier
Martin Summer *bass.*.....Joiner/Harquebusier
Saeyoung Park *sop.*.....
Soapmaker/Soldier/Third Fisherman
Dimitrij Leonov *bass.*.....Scribe/Second Pardonier
Neven Crnic *bar.*.....Baker/Smith
Mario Lerchenberger *ten.*.....
Carpenter/First Fisherman/Old Burgher
Laszlo Kiss *ten.*.....Tailor/Second Fisherman
EntArteOpera Choir; Israel Chamber Orchestra /
Martin Sieghart

Stage director **Roland Schwab**

Video directors **Peter & Paul Landsmann**

Capriccio © **DVD** C9006

(129' • NTSC • 16:9 • 5.1 & stereo • O • S/s)

Recorded live at the Tabakfabrik, Linz, Austria, September 2014



First performed in Stuttgart in 1913, Braunfels's second opera centres on Till Ulenspiegel (or

Eulenspiegel), the rebellious prankster of north European folklore, familiar to everyone from Strauss. If you're expecting 'lustige Streiche' here, though, you're in for an almighty shock. Based on the novel *La légende d'Ulenspiegel* by the Belgian Charles de Coster, this is a brutal work about religious division, in which Till becomes a Protestant freedom-fighter in Spanish-occupied Flanders after his Lutheran father, shopped as a heretic to the authorities by the Catholic bourgeoisie, is tortured to death by the Inquisition. Till's quest for justice results, however, in his eventual sacrifice of his lover Nele to his cause, and Braunfels asks probing questions about whether freedom is genuinely attainable when those who fight for it abandon their own basic humanity.

The score is extreme, raucous and eclectic: the orchestral palette derives from *Götterdämmerung*; screaming Mahlerian marches depict Spanish brutality; and allusions to *La damnation de Faust* remind us that we are witnessing a literal hell on earth. The opera's strident anti-Catholic stance will be problematic for many, as it became for Braunfels himself: following his own conversion to Catholicism in 1918, he discouraged further performances and it was not heard again until 2011, after the score, believed lost, was discovered in the Stuttgart Staatstheater's archives.

This film of Roland Schwab's staging, in the vast space of Linz's Tabakfabrik



'A brutal work about religious division': Braunfels's 'uncomfortable, provocative' Ulenspiegel

during the 2014 International Bruckner Festival, marks its first appearance on DVD. Schwab reimagines it as a *Mad Max*-style apocalyptic thriller, with Catholics in bike gear and post-punk Protestants hunting each other down through a bombed-out landscape of burning cars and oil drums. The end is chilling: Protestant rebels don leathers stripped from Spanish corpses; oppressors and oppressed have become indistinguishable.

Musically, it's impressive. Conductor Martin Sieghart admirably sustains the dramatic tension – no mean feat given that the score's volatility leaves little room for repose. The singing can be raw round the edges, though vocal beauty ultimately has no place here. Marc Horus makes a charismatic, tireless Till, unnervingly sliding towards fanaticism as Christa Ratzenböck's Nele is first enthralled, then increasingly bewildered by him. Best of all is Joachim Goltz, truly terrifying as the Eichmann-like Provost, icily carrying out the orders of the unseen masters who control him. It's uncomfortable, provocative stuff, to be watched when you're feeling strong.

Tim Ashley

F Caccini

La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola di Alcina

Elena Biscuola *mez* Alcina
 Mauro Borgioni *bass* Ruggiero
 Gabriella Martellacci *contr* Melissa
 Francesca Lombardi Mazzulli *sop* Sirena
 Emanuela Galli *sop* Oreste
 Raffaele Giordani *ten* Nettuno
 Yiannis Vassilakis *bar* Astolfo
 Allabastrina; La Pifarescha / Elena Sartori *hpd*
 Glossa © GCD923902 (79' • DDD • S/T/t)



Written to celebrate the visit of Archduke Karl of Styria to Florence during the carnival season of 1625, *La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola di Alcina*, to a libretto by Ferdinando Saracini, is based on an episode from Ludovico Ariosto's immensely popular epic poem *Orlando furioso*. Its narrative structure, which centres on the battle between two sorceresses, Alcina and Melissa, for possession of the warrior Ruggiero, here given a pleasantly authoritative portrayal by Mauro Borgioni, would certainly have been familiar to the aristocratic audience which

gathered on a February morning to witness the first performance. More unfamiliar perhaps was the idea that the music had been composed by a woman. Francesca Caccini, daughter of the legendary singer and court musician Giulio Caccini, now occupies the history books as the first professional female composer, and *La liberazione* is undoubtedly her masterpiece.

At the dramatic heart of the work lie two strophic arias. The first, performed by the Sirena who represents the power of song, is powerfully rendered with dazzling vocal agility by Francesca Lombardi Mazzulli, who convincingly negotiates the virtuosic passagework and surprising harmonic shifts of the accompaniment. Shortly afterwards comes Alcina's complaint at being abandoned by Ruggiero, an extended exercise in the fashion for laments inaugurated by Monteverdi's *Arianna*. Elena Biscuola's superbly controlled and dramatically paced performance successfully exploits every textual nuance, in a finely shaded depiction of Alcina's shifting emotional states. But perhaps the most remarkable music of all is reserved for the chorus of Alcina's discarded lovers, transformed into enchanted plants, who plead with Ruggiero not to leave. In this

magical self-contained episode the choral delivery is underpinned by changing instrumental groups whose timbres lighten as the mood brightens.

There is much else to enjoy on this engaging recording, from Gabriella Martellacci's effective reading of Melissa to the stylish playing of the instrumentalists, in what is surely the most successful account of *La liberazione* to date. Strictly speaking the work is not an opera but a sung entertainment which should finish with staged dances, though Caccini's score, also published in 1625, does not include them. Elena Sartori, who directs her own transcription from the keyboard with sensitivity and imagination, inserts two contemporary *balloetti* into the final scene to make good the omission.

Iain Fenlon

Handel

Theodora

Katherine Watson *sop* Theodora
Stéphanie d'Oustrac *mez* Irene
Philippe Jaroussky *countertenor* Didymus
Kresimir Spicer *ten* Septimius
Callum Thorpe *bass* Valens
Sean Clayton *ten* Messenger

Chorus and Orchestra of Les Arts Florissants /

William Christie

Stage director Stephen Langridge

Video director Olivier Simonnet

Erato © 2015 9029 58899-0

(3h 2' • NTSC • 16:9 • DD5.1 & PCM stereo • 0)

Recorded live at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées,
Paris, October 13 & 16, 2015



It must be a world record for William Christie to have conducted four different commercial releases of Handel's

late masterpiece *Theodora* – a tragic drama about early Christian martyrdom seldom performed until becoming popularised in the past 20-odd years. Some of the credit for the deserved transformation in the oratorio's fortunes has been its transferability to the opera house; this production by Stephen Langridge was staged at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in 2015. Christie's conducting has theatrical acumen on the whole, although it takes half an hour or so for his tempos to calm down; several numbers early on are mushed by impatient rushing past important details of Handel's musical rhetoric. There are some questionable editorial decisions (carried over from the seminal Peter Sellars production at Glyndebourne

in 1996), such as a few insensitive abridgements within numbers.

Katherine Watson captures the full measure of Theodora's dignity, lyricism and profound sublimity in every crucial scene; the middle part of 'Angels, ever bright and fair' has seldom been so beautifully illustrative of the heroine's desperate plight. Philippe Jaroussky's awkward vowels, stilted stage acting and clumsy ornamentation overshadow Didymus's set-piece arias, but his characterisation springs to life when rescuing Theodora from the brothel – the chaste affection between the characters is poignantly etched in the gorgeous duet 'To thee, thou glorious son' (with plangent bassoons and impassioned long melodic phrasing from Les Arts Florissants), and in the final act Jaroussky plays a dignified martyr more persuasively than he had been as an ardent hero in Act 1. Callum Thorpe's portrayal of the governor Valens is spot-on in every respect, and a recurring strand of the production places his cruelty against Kresimir Spicer's compassionate Septimius (his imploring to Valens in 'From virtue springs each gen'rous deed' is one of the best moments in the production). Less happily, Stéphanie d'Oustrac's forceful loudness and hard timbre mean that Irene's invocations 'As with rosy steps' and 'Defend her Heav'n' misfire disappointingly because they lack sufficient sublimity.

Stephen Langridge's production takes a little while to bring to life the full measure of Handel's solemn drama. Theodora's renunciation of worldliness and conversion to Christianity ('Fond, flatt'ring world') and Septimius's distraught 'Dread the fruits of Christian folly' are acted superbly by the entire company (including the chorus). The lewd manner of orgiastic Romans at the start of Act 2 is too vile for Handel's amiable music, but perhaps its vulgarity serves to deepen Theodora's ensuing confinement scene (which is sung and acted to perfection by Watson). Indeed, as the drama deepens and becomes increasingly spiritual, Langridge's production becomes progressively more effective. The final scenes are not merely a shocking depiction of the brutality of a hard-hearted regime but, more importantly, offer a poignant tribute to virtue and goodness in the face of tyranny. **David Vickers**

Handel • Purcell

Handel *Agrippina* - Ogni vento ch'al porto
lo spinga; Pensieri, voi mi tormentate!
Alcina - Ah, mio cor, schernito sei!

Tornami a vagheggiar.

Giulio Cesare in Egitto - Non disperar,
chi sa?; Se pietà me non senti.

Rinaldo - Lascia ch'io pianga.

Rodelinda - Io t'abbraccio.

Theodora, HWV68 - To thee, thou glorious
son of worth²; With darkness deep, as is my
woe. Purcell *Dido and Aeneas* - Thy hand,
Belinda...When I am laid in earth

Sonya Yoncheva *sop* • Karine Deshayes *mez*

Academia Montis Regalis / Alessandro De Marchi

Sony Classical © 88985 30293-2 (64' • DDD • T/T)



In her absolute prime
at 35, the Bulgarian
soprano Sonya

Yoncheva has been
winning plaudits on both sides of the
Atlantic as Violetta, Desdemona, Norma
(at Covent Garden) and Mimi. Her rich
lyric soprano, reminiscent of the young
Angela Gheorghiu in its balance of
brightness and sensuous depth, is a
beautiful instrument and she combines
thoughtful musicianship with bags of
dramatic temperament. On its own terms
this is a compelling if rather haphazardly
ordered Handel recital, though it's
emphatically not for those who set a
premium on what we generally accept
as Baroque style.

In the opening two tracks – Cleopatra's
keening prayer 'Se pietà' and the lovelorn
Alcina's despairing 'Ah, mio cor' – you
might be forgiven for thinking you'd
strayed into Violetta's 'Addio del passato'.
The feeling is intense. But Yoncheva's
distinctive if controlled vibrato – rather
at odds with the lean, crisp playing of
Academia Montis Regalis – might take
some getting used to in this music. More
contentious is her constant ebbing and
swelling, and her almost invariable habit
of approaching climactic (sometimes
not only climactic) notes from below –
Bellinian *moribidezza* transplanted into
an alien aesthetic.

If the disc had continued on these
lines I'd have found the upshot near-
intolerable. In retrospect, these two great
tragic arias can be seen as extreme cases.
While clean attack is never Yoncheva's
priority, she displays ample agility, and
a sense of whooping joy, in Morgana's
'Tornami a vagheggiar' – a Handelian
show-stopper – and lives each phase of
Agrippina's baleful scena 'Pensieri, voi
mi tormenti', though I could have done
with more ruthless glee in the waltzing
'Ogni vento', where Agrippina plots to
make her psychopath son Nero emperor.
Yoncheva is surprisingly, and effectively,

restrained in 'Lascia ch'io pianga', ornamenting the repeats tastefully, and brings a flirtatious lightness of touch to Cleopatra's entrance aria 'Non disperar', bafflingly placed several tracks after 'Se pietà'.

In two of Handel's most poignant duets Yoncheva rather outguns mezzo Karine Deshayes, who sings well enough but finds the tessitura of the Theodora duet, especially, uncomfortably low. Here, as in 'Se pietà', the mournful counterpoints of the single bassoon (Handel prescribes two) are too faintly balanced. Paid-up fans of the glamorous-voiced soprano, not so much fast-rising, as the blurb has it, but fully risen, will ignore any provisos. Others should enjoy this disc as long as they are happy to hear Handel's slower arias refracted through a *bel canto* prism.

Richard Wigmore

Mozart

La clemenza di Tito

Kurt Streit *ten* Tito
 Karina Gauvin *sop* Vitellia
 Kate Lindsey *mez* Sesto
 Julie Boulianne *mez* Annio
 Julie Fuchs *sop* Servilia
 Robert Gleadow *bass-bar* Publio

Ensemble Aedes; Le Cercle de l'Harmonie / Jérémie Rhorer

Alpha ② ALPHA270 (133' • DDD • S/T/t)

Recorded live at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, December 16, 2014



By all accounts, Denis Podalydès's updated production of Mozart's late

opera seria in the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, set in a 1930s hotel, was an agglomeration of modern directors' clichés. But, as so often, the music was far better served, as we can hear in this live recording. Jérémie Rhorer confirmed his Mozartian sympathies in his recent *Entführung* (9/16); and except for the odd controversial tempo at both ends of the spectrum (as in the hell-for-leather end of Sesto's 'Parto, parto'), conducts Mozart's score with an acute feel for its distinctive *tinta* and rhetoric. Rhorer is alive to the serene, classical beauty and nobility that made *Tito* one of Mozart's most popular works in the decades after his death. Yet from the moment the Overture tumbles into the dialogue between the hopelessly smitten Sesto and the overwrought Vitellia, we sense that this will be a performance of life-and-death intensity. Recitatives, in particular, are as alive as in any recording I know,

animated by the swirling, smouldering fortepiano, which, like the even more flamboyant continuo in René Jacobs's recording, becomes a hyperactive commentator on the drama.

Much of the success of *La clemenza di Tito* hinges on the performances of the singers playing Vitellia and Sesto. Karina Gauvin and Kate Lindsey do not disappoint. Both present credible, vulnerable characters, vivid both in their soliloquies and their interaction. Gauvin may lack the sulphurous chest notes and dangerous sexual allure of Alexandrina Pendatchanska for Jacobs, yet her Vitellia, balancing neurotic hauteur with a sense of classical style (never Pendatchanska's forte), is superbly sung and powerfully acted (though I could have done without the cackles of derisive laughter in Act 1). Few sopranos in the role match her combination of agility, vocal grandeur and subtle phrasing, not least in the tender, rueful opening of her final scena, 'Non più di fiori'. If Lindsey, with her supple, glowing mezzo, is stretched by the precipitate tempo at the close of 'Parto, parto' (where the superb obbligato clarinet is unfazed), hers is another finely sung, intensely 'lived' performance. Both her big scenas, poignantly charting each phase of Sesto's anguished vacillations, rightly bring the house down.

Vastly experienced both as Idomeneo and Tito, Kurt Streit's lyric tenor still sounds sweet when he sings softly, as in his opening aria, though it now grows tight under pressure. It is always a challenge for the singer to make much of the character of Tito, as much a symbolic ideal as an individual. But Streit convincingly embodies both the Emperor's innate goodness and his agonies over the conflicting duties of office. The minor but crucial roles of Annio and Servilia are well taken by the rich-toned Canadian mezzo Julie Boulianne (deeply touching in Annio's plea to Tito to spare Sesto's life) and the crystalline soprano Julie Fuchs. Fuchs's exquisite shaping of Servilia's 'S'altro che lagrime' – music poised between Zerlina's 'Vedrai carino' and the *Adagio* of the Clarinet Concerto – makes this aria the true Mozartian moment of redemptive grace. The orchestral sound is a shade dry, and you'll have to put up with intermittent stage noise. Yet while Jacobs's thrilling performance – too eccentric for some, I know – would still be my first choice, Rhorer's is a vivid, dramatically compelling addition to the impressive *Tito* discography. **Richard Wigmore**

Selected comparison:

Jacobs (6/06) (HARM) HMC90 1923/4

Mozart

Così fan tutte – Ei parte...Per pietà, ben mio; Temerari! Sortitel!...Come scoglio; Una donna a quindici anni. **Don Giovanni** – Ah fuggi il traditor; In quali eccessi...Mi tradi quell' alma; Non me lo credi?... Batti, batti, o bel Masetto. **Le nozze di Figaro** – Overture; Giunse alfin il momento...Deh vieni non tardar; Non so più cosa son; Porgi amor; Voi che sapete. Bella mia fiamma...Resta, oh cara, K528. Misera, dove son!, K369

Anett Fritsch *sop*

Munich Radio Orchestra / Alessandro De Marchi

Orfeo ② C903 161A (61' • DDD • T/t)



Anett Fritsch's Mozart is a sheer delight. This is no bland essay of the usual suspects painted

in anonymous colours but a vivid portrait gallery of characters that Fritsch has actually played on stage. She presents multiple characters from the three da Ponte operas and they're all beautifully variegated, all coming across as living, breathing individuals. Fritsch's is a light soprano – not unlike Maria Bengtsson's, whose Mozart disc I reviewed last month – but she does so much more with the text and characterisation.

Her Cherubino is breathless with hormonal excitement ('Voi che sapete' wonderfully ornamented in the repeat), her Countess aches with pain. Fritsch does marvels with the text, clearly understanding every word. Her Susanna is coquettish, with rolled Rs in 'dolce susurro' making my heart skip a beat.

Donna Elvira is tormented and slightly unhinged, allowing touches of bluster into her coloratura, whereas Zerlina is all sweetness and innocence, demonstrating plenty of agility in the closing phrases of 'Batti, batti', which is taken at a sprightly pace. High notes are coloured imaginatively. Fiordiligi's 'Per pietà' is earnest, verging on desperate, while there's a stoic, impassioned quality to 'Come scoglio'. Even Despina – who I usually find an irritant – is irresistible here, a saucy minx determined to liberate *Così*'s sisters. Fritsch follows this up with two superb concert arias. Perhaps I'm being greedy, but I'd have loved a souvenir of her Pamina too.

From the very first bars of the Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*, with punchy 'historically informed' woodwinds and bristling strings, the playing of the Munich Radio Orchestra under Alessandro De Marchi instantly makes you sit up and listen. A jewel of a disc.

Mark Pullinger

LOVE
MUSIC
HELP
MUSICIANS^{UK}



Supported by the Maria Callas estate.
Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

She left a legacy to music. Will you?

Maria Callas said, "When music fails to soothe the ear, the heart and the senses, then it has missed the point." Her stunning voice and passion may never be equalled but will live forever.

You too could leave a lasting contribution to music with a gift in your will.

Help Musicians UK has been supporting musicians since 1921, from starting out, to coping with illness or retirement.

Show your love for music and contact us today.

helpmusicians.org.uk/legacy
legacy@helpmusicians.org.uk
0207 239 9114

Backing musicians throughout their careers.
Registered charity No. 228089.

Puccini

Turandot

Nina Stemme *sop* Turandot
Aleksandrs Antonenko *ten* Calaf
Maria Agresta *sop* Liù
Angelo Vecchia *bar* Ping
Roberto Covatta *ten* Pang
Blagoj Nacoski *ten* Pong
Alexander Tsymbalyuk *bass-bar* Timur
Carlo Bosi *ten* Emperor Altoum
Gianluca Breda *bass* Mandarin
Azer Rza-Zada *ten* Prince of Persia
Barbara Rita Lavarian *sop* First Maidservant
Kjersti Ødegaard *mez* Second Maidservant
Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala, Milan /
Riccardo Chailly

Stage director **Nikolaus Lehnhoff**

Video director **Patrizia Carmine**

Decca (F) DVD 074 3937DG; (F) 074 3938DH

(136' • NTSC • 16:9 • 1080i • DTS-HD MA5.1,

DTSS1 & LPCM stereo • 0 • S/s)

Recorded live, May 2015



This production from May 2015 must have been one of the first of Riccardo Chailly's tenure at La Scala. The stage director was Nikolaus Lehnhoff, well known for his Janáček productions at Glyndebourne; the excellent direction for TV by Patrizia Carmine includes effective shots from above the stage. This was the first time that Luciano Berio's completion of the opera (of which more anon) had been performed in Milan.

The set and costumes (Raimund Bauer and Andrea Schmidt-Futterer) are a feast for the eye. There is an enormous studded wall with an entrance and a balcony; in the wall, towering over the balcony, is a circular space in which the princess (and, later, her father Altoum) first appears. The costumes include a fearsome black creation for Turandot, festooned with layers of material resembling seaweed, and striped pantaloons for the masks Ping, Pang and Pong. Then there is Duane Schuler's lighting, which turns the set blood-red at appropriate moments.

The opera opens with the Mandarin, dressed as a ringmaster, announcing that the Prince of Persia, the latest of Turandot's suitors, has failed the obligatory test and will be beheaded at moonrise. Calaf is swiftly reunited with his father Timur, dark glasses signifying the latter's blindness. When Turandot confirms the execution, she does so with a curved staff, the symbol of her authority. In the next act, Calaf snatches it away on answering the riddles correctly, a telling moment. Light relief is

provided by the three masks, seated at a table and drinking beer from the bottle.

On her first, silent appearance, Turandot is so plastered in red and white make-up that it's hard to see why Calaf is bowled over. Never mind: Nina Stemme is quite wonderful once she starts to sing. Clutching her red staff, she delivers 'In questa reggia' with burnished tone, culminating in a gleaming top C when Calaf joins her in the threefold 'Gli enigmi sono tre'. Aleksandrs Antonenko is a stolid Calaf, with a limited range of facial expressions, but he has the notes all right. Maria Agresta as Liù ends 'Signore, ascolta!' beautifully, followed by a lovely *pianissimo* from Chailly's orchestra. Alexander Tsymbalyuk is touching in Timur's lament for Liù, and the masks are well characterised. Carlo Bosi, with whitened face and long red beard, is an unusually vigorous-sounding emperor.

Now for the ending. The completion by Franco Alfano was brutally cut at the behest of Toscanini for the first, posthumous production in 1926; that shortened version, the one generally used, is widely regarded as an anti-climax. Berio's completion, composed in 2001, takes the same reduced text. It cleverly makes use of Puccini's tunes without sounding like a pastiche, but it loses impetus in a three-minute passage for orchestra alone. It would be interesting to see and hear Alfano's original. A firm recommendation, though, for this eminently watchable offering from the theatre of the opera's premiere.

Richard Lawrence

Rossini

Armida

Carmen Romeu *sop* Armida
Enea Scala *ten* Rinaldo
Dario Schmunck *ten* Goffredo/Carlo
Robert McPherson *ten* Ubaldo/Gernando
Leonard Bernad *bass* Idrate/Astarotte
Adam Smith *ten* Eustazio

Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of Flanders Opera, Ghent / Alberto Zedda

Stage director **Mariame Clément**

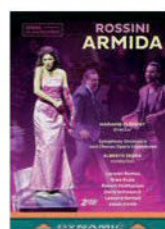
Video director **Jan Bosteels**

Dynamic (F) 2 DVD 37763; (F) 57763

(162' • NTSC • 16:9 • 1080i • DTS-HD MA5.1,

DD5.1 & PCM stereo • 0 • S/s)

Recorded live, November 2015



The tale of Rinaldo the Crusader knight caught in the toils of the sorceress Armida had been popular with

composers long before the 25-year-old Rossini created his version for Naples in 1817. A born rationalist, he probably wouldn't have considered the subject had it not been for an amorous entanglement that summer on the island of Ischia with his Armida-to-be, the soprano Isabella Colbran, and a demand from the recently rebuilt Teatro San Carlo for a three-act visual feast designed to show off the theatre's state-of-the-art stage machinery.

Expensive to produce and requiring a charismatic lead singer possessed of rare coloratura skills, the opera was more often cannibalised for its choicest numbers than actually staged. A further disincentive was the erroneous belief that it required six coloratura tenors. Since two of the *comprimario* roles are doubled, the actual number is four.

Finding a quartet of gifted tenors is no longer a problem, as Garsington Opera proved in 2010 when it gave *Armida* its first UK staging, and as Flanders Opera demonstrates here. It helps that the veteran Rossini conductor and scholar Alberto Zedda – rising 88 and still ablaze with enthusiasm for the music – knows where the young talents are. His four tenors, led by Enea Scala's vocally gifted and physically imposing Rinaldo, are all first-rate.

The young Spanish soprano Carmen Romeu is a musically accomplished Armida, though an insipid production and even more insipid costuming mean that she is no sorceress. Even Maria Callas, the 20th century's most compelling Armida, would have been hard-pressed to execute her final apocalyptic Ride with the Furies dressed as a 1950s housewife.

The production is silly rather than offensive – witness the 'fearful wood' in Act 2 where Rinaldo and the demons appear dressed as footballers. As to visual spectacle, there is none. To be fair to Flanders Opera, it would probably take the resources of the New York Met to stage *Armida* as Rossini and his collaborators originally conceived it, though, worryingly, director Mariame Clément barely seems able to get her cast and chorus on and off the stage efficiently. The ballet is included but the movement is risible. Heard on CD, this would be a decently sung, stop-gap *Armida*. As a DVD it's a non-starter.

Richard Osborne

Thommessen

The Hermaphrodite

Eir Inderhaug, Isa Katharina Gericke *sops*
 Anna Elisabeth Einarsson *mez* Nils Harald
 Sødal *ten* Espen Fegran *bar* Ketil Hugaas *bass*
 Oslo Sinfonietta / Christian Eggen
 Aurora (M) ② ACD5049 (104' • DDD • T/t)



The Hermaphrodite is described as a 'chamber opera in seven parts', but

that's only part of the story. The work is conceived as a 'ballet-opera' and in addition to its chamber ensemble and six vocal soloists (without fixed roles) it calls for two actors and any number of dancers. This is a theatrical piece in every sense but listening to an audio recording is an intense experience; much of the music is so physical that dance and movement fill your mind's eye (and ear) involuntarily.

The work's seven parts chart the faltering journey of a hermaphrodite into life, its struggle to accept itself and others (despite its beautiful effect on a group of men who attack it), its troubled journey to physical confidence, sexual awakening and eventual love. That journey is told clearly, brutally and tenderly by the various components but I have yet to get a handle on the symbolism of the epilogue, in which a man dives into the sea and copulates with an enormous female shark.

Nor is that an issue, because however absorbing Olav Anton Thommessen's work is on the surface, it is surely filled with unknown unknowns that have yet to pose similar riddles. The music is spare, skeletal (often underpinned by careful, capering percussion) and tense. The use of singing voices as instruments to accompany spoken Norwegian creates the most tender of soundscapes, notably at the Hermaphrodite's lurching retreats from sensuality (as in Act 1 part 4, 'Desire'). Elsewhere the vocal writing is exceptional, as when soprano Eir Inderhaug quivers, splutters and then joins the wordless fabric of the ensemble in Act 2 part 1, 'A Concert Chamber'.

The composer has a habit of alighting upon fertile textures and mining deep into them (as in that same movement's entwined high-pitch ribbons on what sounds like flute and violin). Rarely are non-spoken voices foregrounded, but when they are – as when two cautiously approach one another in Act 2 part 3, 'The Meeting' – the effect is of pure nature music without a hint of contrivance.

Thommessen's etched textures want to burst into expressionism in 'Sleep', the epilogue to Act 1, but he reins them in and the delicate equilibrium of the piece is preserved. In Act 2 part 2, 'Insight', the Hermaphrodite experiences playful impulses and accepts its duality; again Thommessen's scoring is thrilling precisely because it is contained – the creature's understanding remains limited. A moving and absorbing creation that proves even more so now, 40 years after it was written, given Western society's journey down the very same paths (though we've yet to embrace bestiality with sharks).

Andrew Mellor

Wagner

Das Liebesverbot

Christopher Maltman *bar* Friedrich
 Peter Lodahl *ten* Luzio
 Ilker Arcayürek *ten* Claudio
 David Alegret *ten* Antonio
 David Jerusalem *bass* Angelo
 Manuela Uhl *sop* Isabella
 Maria Miró *sop* Mariana
 Ante Jerkunica *bass* Brighella
 Isaac Galán *bar* Danieli
 Maria Hinojosa *sop* Dorella
 Francisco Vas *ten* Pontius Pilate
 Chorus and Orchestra of the Teatro Real, Madrid /
 Ivor Bolton

Stage director Kasper Holten

Video director János Darvas

Opus Arte (F) DVD OA1191D; (C) OABD7213D
 (160' • NTSC • 16:9 • 1080p • DTS-HD MA5.1,
 DTS5.1 & LPCM stereo • 0 • S/s)

Recorded live, March 3 & 5, 2016



Wagner's second complete opera mostly switched allegiance to contemporary Italian (Donizetti, Rossini) and

French (Auber, Hérold) models rather than German ones. Its overture opens with a Mediterranean skirt swish of castanets, tambourine and triangle. (The libretto translates Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* Venice into Palermo.) There follows a 'Grand comic opera' which, in the still invaluable and only complete 1976 BBC recording under Sir Edward Downes (now on DG), runs a little over three hours. This new performance lasts around two hours 35 – there are some cuts mostly of repeats, and the running time is about the same as the 1983 Orfeo Sawallisch recording, although longer than rivals new and older from Frankfurt (Oehms/Weigle) and Austrian Radio (Melodram/Heger). Only the ending

here is seriously truncated, with the final March returning the German King to Palermo (nearly five minutes on the Downes recording) cut completely.

The cast, led by Christopher Maltman's Friedrich (Wagner's version of the hypocritical regent Angelo) and Manuela Uhl's Isabella, go to with more than a will, although Uhl's encompassing of the part's ferociously wide tessitura is less confident than reviews of last year's Madrid opening suggested. The Luzio and Claudio tenors – more awkward to cast because of Wagner's uneven vocal writing – present clear personalities but sometimes struggle with their music. Bolton conducts with enthusiasm. Like Downes he plays the ruling influence of each musical section for all its worth – the chorus music and the scenes with Luzio, Brighella and Dorella are unapologetically Italian, the nunnery duet for Isabella/Mariana wholly Weber-like; whereas the Sawallisch and Weigle recordings boil down Wagner's borrowings into a kind of pre-mature Wagner style which lessens the score's eccentricity and colour.

There's obvious value in being able to access a performance of this relatively unexplored work on screen for the first time (officially). Yet director Kasper Holten has decided from the word go – an animated projection of Wagner's head makes faces during the playing of the overture – that this is a comic opera through and through. He gets Maltman to play Friedrich – surely a more dangerous character – in the style of past British artists essaying Beckmesser (and has designer Steffen Aarfig present a flat wall-plus-projections 1970s musical set to go with that). No opportunity for a laugh is passed up – the teddy bear Friedrich agonises with in bed when there is no assignation message from Isabella or the judge's gavel which either loses its head or becomes an accidental phallic worry bead. The result, while well-worked, takes away a dimension from Wagner's opera. The revolt to ensure free love (which the chorus and Isabella celebrate at the end) needs a genuine opposition, which is not much enhanced by having the returning King played by a male actor with an Angela Merkel face mask. Mike Ashman

'La storia di Orfeo'

Arias and scenes from Monteverdi L'Orfeo

Rossi Orfeo Sartorio L'Orfeo

Philippe Jaroussky *countertenor* Orfeo

Emőke Baráth *sop* Euridice

Chorus of Radiotelevisione Svizzera;

I Barocchisti / Diego Fasolis

Erato (F) 9029 58519-0 (64' • DDD • T/t)



Das Liebesverbot, Wagner's second complete opera, opens with a skirt swish of castanets, tambourine and triangle



What a brilliant idea. Taking the best of three different Orpheus operas

and weaving them together into a single composite, Philippe Jaroussky and Diego Fasolis create a new musical account of the familiar myth – a showcase for the stylistic range and emotional scope of the 17th century. But while 'La storia di Orfeo' is skilfully structured and stylishly performed, it's a project that follows in well-trodden footsteps.

On their album 'Il pianto d'Orfeo' (DHM, 1/15) Scherzi Musicali collated repertoire to similar effect, creating a collage rather than a narrative. L'Arpeggiata's 'Orfeo Chamán' (Erato, 10/16) was more dramatically coherent, pairing freshly composed material with folk and historical music, and earlier this year tenor Thomas Hobbs strung a sequence of lute songs together to conjure a day in the life of Orpheus (Paraty, see review on page 103).

What sells 'La storia' is its functionality. This hour-long fusion of Rossi's *Orfeo*, Sartorio's *L'Orfeo* and Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* would make a brilliant concert cantata, exposing two comparatively neglected operas while also throwing the familiar Monteverdi into new relief. Each work has its own strengths, and this pick-and-mix approach embraces all of them. Rossi's madrigal-like ensembles ('Ah, piangete!', 'Dormite begl'occhi') bridge the divide between Monteverdi's choruses and duets, while Sartorio's melodic gift gives us a handful of attractive pastoral numbers, including the exquisite 'Cara e amabile'. Monteverdi is represented in lively choruses, extended recitatives and, of course, the extraordinary 'Possente spirito' – recorded here for the first time by a countertenor.

If the project does feel like an elaborate excuse to facilitate this particular land-grab by Jaroussky, it's one well worth indulging. Any fears that Jaroussky's feathery tone might prove insufficiently flexible and varied for this extended episode are quickly dispelled,

as he moves from husky despair to assertive persuasion. His is, perhaps inevitably, a more youthful, fragile Orpheus than from a typical tenor, but the effect is moving, especially when set against Emőke Baráth's wonderfully charred soprano, glints of brightness tempered by smoky darkness.

Fasolis directs a highly textured performance by I Barrochisti, bringing real depth to recitatives and dances alike, and the singers of the Coro della Radio Svizzera serve neatly as both step-out soloists and ensemble. What could look like a musical gimmick is actually an effective way of reclaiming and repackaging repertoire. While the Rossi could plausibly stand alone, who would ever stage the flawed Sartorio? What a shame there wasn't space to add Caccini's *Euridice* into the mix as well.

Alexandra Coghlan

Find your
music on
www.qobuz.com

qobuz

The Editors of Gramophone's sister music magazines, Jazzwise and Songlines, recommend some of their favourite recordings from the past month

Jazz

Brought to you by **jazzwise**

Theo Bleckmann

Elegy

ECM © 2512



Although the German singer may be largely defined by his renditions of the music of anybody from Charles Ives to Kate

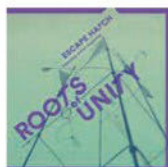
Bush this is an album in which he fully asserts himself as a composer. Or more precisely, an exponent of themes for vocal sounds rather than words. What is equally significant is the understatement if not outright discretion with which he performs on pieces that fully uphold the meaning of the title *Elegy* insofar as they have a quality of deep lament and poetic gravitas that plays to the strengths of a strong, sensitive ensemble. Claudia Quintet drummer-leader John Hollenbeck and guitarist Ben Monder are longstanding Bleckmann collaborators.

Pianist Shai Maestro's gossamer chords and Chris Tordini's spare bass-lines play their part. For the most part this is a work of considerable stealth, conceived almost as a theatre show, with a number of interludes bridging the various scenes in which Bleckmann and band create music that is all the more evocative for its lightness of touch and absence of words. **Kevin Le Gendre**

Escape Hatch featuring Julian Argüelles

Roots of Unity

Whirlwind Recordings © WR4696



The ex-Loose Tubes saxophonist Julian Argüelles and Phronesis pianist Ivo Neame are among the most influential figures of their respective jazz generations in the UK. Yet this new recording is also an opportunity for

a lesser-known jazz musician – the London-based Italian bassist Andrea Di Biase – to really shine. And he makes a big impression on a first release for a new trio calling themselves Escape Hatch. Di Biase is responsible for the bulk of the originals (a few are penned by Neame, and him and the bassist have done a great job on production). Di Biase draws impressionistically from his studies in classical music in Milan, the Mediterranean/Latin-toned jazz of his background and the work of now departed mentors John Taylor (who taught him at Guildhall) and Kenny Wheeler. His deep-toned conversational bass is compulsive listening (alongside drummer Dave Hamblett's highly energetic responses) especially in anticipating Neame's spatially-aware improv and tapping in to the rapturous momentum of an Argüelles sax solo. It's exhilarating contemporary British jazz with a capital J. **Selwyn Harris**

World Music

Brought to you by **SONGLINES**

Maria Pomianowska

The Voice of Suka

For Tune © 0110 016



This is a remarkable album. Maria Pomianowska is a Polish fiddle player who collaborates with musicians all over the world; she has made recent recordings with musicians in Pakistan, Senegal and Tunisia. But this recording is purely Polish. Having learned to play sarangi in India, Pomianowska specialises in playing and reviving old Polish upright fiddles – like the Plock fiddle and suka – played with the fingernails in a similar way. A 16th-century six-string fiddle was discovered in 1985 in the town of Plock and she plays on a reproduction of this. Different suka fiddles have been reconstructed based on 19th-century illustrations. Here she is joined

by fellow suka players Aleksandra Kauf and Iwona Rapacz plus percussionist Patricia Napierala. They also add wordless vocals on occasion. The 12 compositions are by Pomianowska and have single-word titles – 'Rainbow', 'Ocean', 'Forest' – although none of them are particularly illustrative; they are more like moods, textures or flights of fantasy. This is inventive, beautiful music that could work at a classical, folk or world music festival. **Simon Broughton**

Koki Nakano with Vincent Segal

Lift

No Format! © NØF. 34



Anything that involves the French cellist and world music adventurer Vincent Segal is always worth hearing. Here, he teams up with the

28-year-old classically trained Japanese pianist and composer Koki Nakano, now a neighbour of Segal in Paris. The nine pieces are all Nakano's compositions for piano and cello rather than collaborations, although one can be pretty certain that, in rehearsals for the recording, Segal brought his own vivid dialogue to their musical conversations. Each piece seems to have its own distinctive character. 'Silhouette' is constructed like a Bach fugue. 'Petite Piece Pour un Inconnu' owes more to Michael Nyman. The title-track was inspired by the 'lift' of a ballerina and the piano melody similarly seems to defy gravity, underpinned by the vibrating muscle of Segal's cello chords. 'A Lady Just Quit Smoking' has a jazzier syncopation, with a Dave Brubeck 'Take Five' vibe. *Lift* probably draws too heavily on European conservatoire tradition to fit easily into the 'world music' pigeonhole. But it's still utterly enthralling. **Nigel Williamson**

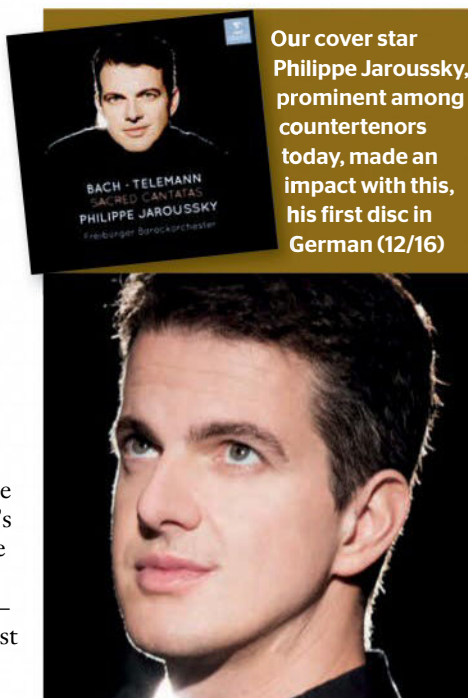
Gramophone, Jazzwise and Songlines are published by MA Music, Leisure & Travel, home to the world's best specialist music magazines. To find out more, visit gramophone.co.uk, jazzwisemagazine.com and songlines.co.uk

MUSICAL CONNECTIONS

Two varying listening journeys launched by the high male voice, introduced by James Jolly

Back to where it all began

'Mr Deller uses his voice with great art and it shows no trace of the flabby tone of some singers of his kind; it has indeed considerable resonance and a beautiful flexibility.' So wrote *Gramophone* in August 1949 of perhaps the first countertenor to appear in our pages. If **Alfred Deller** was the pioneer in Europe, **Russell Oberlin** made the voice type famous in America with a smooth, rather androgynous sound (and fabulous diction). **James Bowman** was the next star countertenor in the UK, an inspiring musician whose tone and delivery is immediately recognisable (try him in his prime in 1975 in Vivaldi's *Stabat mater*). **Paul Esswood**, with a more restrained manner, has a sound many describe as being particularly 'English' – his Britten folksongs find him at his most expressive, but sample him as Philip Glass's Akhnaten. **Michael Chance**, a superb exponent of Early and Baroque repertoires, seemed to usher in a new style of countertenor singing, one characterised by very little vibrato and an ease of delivery with no apparent 'gear change'. Chance's lute-song album with Christopher Wilson, 'The Sympres Curten of the Night', is a particular favourite. **Jochen Kowalski** possesses a rich and powerful voice that has allowed him to ride a modern orchestra with ease (in roles such as Orlovsky in *Die Fledermaus*) and he has a range that takes him higher than many of his colleagues. **Gérard Lesne**, of the same generation as Kowalski, has focused on earlier repertoires and was one of the first countertenor stars in his native France; his impassioned singing of *Schlage doch, gewünschte Stunde*, once attributed to Bach and with its ravishing bell obbligato, is a highlight of his catalogue. **Andreas Scholl**, for many the first countertenor to achieve a 'mainstream' following, heralded yet another style of vocal production characterised by beauty of tone and a wonderful sense of freedom. The Americans **Derek Lee Ragin** and **David Daniels** sing with an astounding ease, sweetness and grace; both are superb representatives of the 'modern countertenor'. From them to Philippe Jaroussky is but a small jump.



Philippe Jaroussky: magical in Bach and Telemann

Our cover star **Philippe Jaroussky**, prominent among countertenors today, made an impact with this, his first disc in German (12/16)

Vocal muses then and now

If you've ever wondered what a castrato sounds like, there are recordings (from 1902 and '04) of **Alessandro Moreschi**, a member of the Sistine Chapel Choir. It's a strange sound, even allowing for his dodgy tuning, but the top of the voice has extraordinary freedom. The heyday of the castrato – when they were the superstars of the operatic world with fees to match – coincided with one of the most fruitful periods of Handel's life. Many of the star countertenors had nicknames and drew from Handel and his contemporaries some now classic roles. Senesino (Francesco Bernardi) inspired, among other parts, the title-role of *Giulio Cesare* (try **Jennifer Larmore** in 'Va tacito'). Caffarelli (Gaetano Majorano) coaxed from Handel one of his most heart-melting arias 'Ombra mai fu' in *Serse* (let **Andreas Scholl** stand in here). Giovanni Carestini (celebrated stylishly by **Philippe Jaroussky**) famously crossed swords with Handel but, according to Charles Burney, sang like an angel even as his voice darkened and deepened. Farinelli (Carlo Maria Michelangelo Nicola Broschi) made a huge impact in London in Hasse's *Artaserse* (**Franco Fagioli**, caught live, does 'Per questo dolce amplesso' with style). Nicola Grimaldi (also known as Nicolini) created the role of Rinaldo for Handel and in so doing helped establish the composer in London. The *Gramophone* Award-winning set under Hogwood finds **David Daniels** on thrilling form. Gaetano Guadagni, a very serious artist by all accounts and the beneficiary of three new arias in Handel's *Messiah*, created the role of Orfeo in Gluck's opera; his simple, mellifluous approach found favour with contemporary audiences. Perhaps the restrained, gently ornamented approach of **Bernarda Fink** comes close to Guadagni's style? An 11-year-old Mozart encountered Venanzio Rauzzini in Vienna and wrote the title-role of *Lucio Silla* as well as *Exsultate jubilate* for him – **Carolyn Sampson** is well-nigh faultless here). Two modern muses? **James Bowman** for Britten, in *Death in Venice*, and **Bejun Mehta** for George Benjamin and his *Written on Skin*.

Purcell Music for a while Deller Harmonia Mundi
Handel Rodelinda Oberlin DG
Vivaldi Stabat mater Bowman Decca
Glass Akhnaten Esswood Sony Classical
'Elizabethan and Jacobean Lute Songs'
 The Sympres Curten of the Night Chance Chandos
Pergolesi Stabat mater Kowalski Capriccio
Bach (attrib) Cantata No 53 Lesne Erato
Vivaldi Cessate, omai cessate Scholl Harmonia Mundi
Gluck Orfeo ed Euridice Ragin Decca
'A Quiet Thing' Blackberry Winter Daniels Erato



To explore these playlists via a streaming service, or to create your own, we suggest qobuz.com. You can listen to these particular playlists at gramophone.co.uk/playlists

Bach/Gounod Ave Maria Moreschi Trunk
Handel Giulio Cesare Larmore Harmonia Mundi
Handel Serse Scholl Harmonia Mundi
'Carestini: A Castrato's Story' Jaroussky Erato
Hasse Artaserse Fagioli Dynamic
Handel Rinaldo Daniels Decca
Gluck Orfeo ed Euridice Fink Harmonia Mundi
Mozart Exsultate jubilate Sampson BIS
Britten Death in Venice Bowman Decca
Benjamin Written on Skin B Mehta Nimbus

REPLAY

Rob Cowan's monthly survey of historic reissues and archive recordings

Toscanini at white heat

The great Italian maestro caught live with his NBC Symphony in Brahms and Beethoven

Even more than with Wilhelm Furtwängler's radio recordings, the broadcast legacy of Arturo Toscanini stands to teach us about evolving aspects of the maestro's style that, with very few exceptions, were not so much as hinted at in his commercial discography. Take the most obvious revelation among a recent batch of Toscanini releases on Immortal Performances – all of them from live events – the 1935 New York Philharmonic **Brahms** *German Requiem*, a first release as far as I know, generally broader than its 1943 English-language NBC successor (now on Naxos) and boasting two superb soloists, the bass-baritone Friedrich Schorr and the superb soprano Elisabeth Rethberg. Try track 7, 'Denn wir haben', Schorr summoning the chorus as Hagen summons the vassals, the tempo for the choral passage imposingly magisterial. The grainy, subfusc sound won't pass muster for the unconverted, but if this is your field of interest, fear not, it isn't too bad (the NBC version is only marginally better). Fill-ups include Toscanini's hair-raising if unobtrusive American premiere performance of Edmund Rubbra's orchestral version of Brahms's *Handel Variations* and an occasionally headstrong but intensely involving Brahms B flat Concerto with Horowitz from the 1939 Lucerne Festival, OK sound-wise save for parts of the slow movement.

When it comes to Toscanini's incandescent 1937 Salzburg performance of **Wagner's** *Die Meistersinger* (Hans Hermann Nissen, Maria Reining, VPO) an excellent earlier incarnation from Andante is marginally smoother sound-wise whereas the Immortal Performances transfer accentuates the top and bottom ends of the spectrum which serves to bring the voices into greater prominence and grant the orchestra more of an edge, especially among the lower brass. If you have the earlier version to hand then you

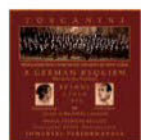
might like to compare the two at either the start of the Overture or the closing scene, from 'Verachtet mir die Meister nicht' onwards. There's a bonus too, not included by Andante, in the form of extracts from an equally compelling 1936 Salzburg Toscanini *Meistersinger*, again with Nissen, featuring the wonderful Charles Kullman as Walther rather than Henk Noort, and Lotte Lehmann as Eva – in principle that is, and while she's only momentarily represented in the 1936 excerpts she does at least appear in a Vienna account of the Quintet from the previous year, under Felix Weingartner.

Other IPCD releases include the 1940 NBC Verdi *Requiem* (the maestro's finest) and *Te Deum* (Milanov, Björling, Castagna and Moscona (IPCD1073-2) and the NBC Symphony 1937 'First Broadcast', Vivaldi, Mozart No 40 (surely Toscanini's most impassioned) and Brahms's First (IPCD1072-2). Both sound good, but the real prize is the 1939 **Beethoven** symphony cycle, though I wish the 1940 *Missa solemnis* had also been included. Transfers are of course very much of the essence and for me the litmus test is the Second Symphony, one

of the crowning glories of Toscanini's Beethoven on disc, and a fine place to compare 1939 live with the RCA recording from a few years later. The Symphony's *Adagio molto* opening is so much more flexible than it later became and the *Allegro* that follows is truly *con brio*. And which CD version to go for? Forget the Naxos transfer, which opens to volleys of crackle. To the best of my knowledge Music & Arts were the last to issue a slim-line box of the symphony cycle plus most of the overtures. Its transfers are on the whole excellent, the Second a little richer in texture overall than IPCD who score points for clarity.

IPCD stretches the Beethoven venture to a total of 10 CDs, which gives a clue as to some fairly stingy playing times. But we're also given a good deal more material, plus radio announcements and interesting recorded interviews. What IPCD has done is to present each concert as it was originally broadcast, the contents including – in addition to what Music & Arts offers us – Toscanini's bolstered version of the Septet, Op 20 (a divine performance, generally lighter, sweeter and more transparent than the post-war RCA re-make), music from the *Prometheus* ballet, two movements from the Op 135 Quartet, the *Fidelio* and *Coriolan* overtures, and prior to the most urgent and combustible *Choral* you're ever likely to hear, a work that hints at the finale's principal 'Ode to Joy' theme, the *Choral Fantasia* with Ania Dorfman, splashy as hell to start with and more frenetic than 'joyful' later on. There's also a bonus poached from Toscanini's 1944 Beethoven cycle, the Third Piano Concerto with a poised yet fully fired-up Arthur Rubinstein. We're given both the performance and the rehearsal. Go to 4'27" into the slow movement and listen to the magical entry of the strings; only

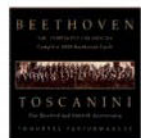
THE RECORDINGS



Brahms *Ein deutsches Requiem*, etc **Various artists / Toscanini** Immortal Performances (B) (2) IPCD1068-2



Wagner *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, etc **Various artists / Toscanini** Immortal Performances (B) (2) IPCD1069-2



Beethoven Symphonies, etc **Various artists / Toscanini** Immortal Performances (B) (10) IPCD1064-7

Toscanini's version with Myra Hess is as entrancing at this point (Naxos).

Ever since first discovering this cycle many years ago on the Olympic LP label, I still can't believe our luck. Flawed as it sometimes is, as well as occasionally over-tense, this is Beethoven fired straight from the hip – raw, even ferocious at times, structure conscious, heartfelt, and above all, profoundly honest. You'll either love it or hate it – but if you love it (and I think most readers will), nothing else thereafter will deliver quite as handsomely. Excellent annotations include chapter and verse on how the transfers were achieved, including a pair of impressive 'stereo' Beethoven overtures from November 1939: *Leonore* No 3 and *Egmont*.

Vocal gems from Oz

Another remarkable CD set arrives via the Australian Eloquence label: **From Melba to Sutherland – Australian Singers on Record**. The first thing to say is that I never realised that so many great singers were Australian: Harold Williams, Malcolm McEachern (of 'Flotsam and Jetsam' fame), Marjorie Lawrence, June Bronhill, Rita Hunter, Yvonne Minton, Yvonne Kenny and many, many more, a good number of them hardly known to us here in the UK – but virtually all of them wonderful to encounter. And there are those who are more familiar as Australians, singers such as Elsie Morison, John Cameron and of course Peter Dawson, not to mention the music hall stars Albert Whelan and Florrie Forde. Roger Neill and Tony Locantro provide the exhaustive annotations, which include biographies of all the singers plus copious photographs. Where early recordings are concerned the transfers are superb. An unpublished Victor 78 of Frances Alda and Caruso in the 'Miserere' from Verdi's *Il trovatore* (December 1909) is a highlight but it's the plethora of rarities that's the real draw: Gertrude Johnson, who made her London debut as Musetta to Melba's Mimì, represented here in 1929 singing Cyril Scott with the composer himself at the piano. Then there's the tenor Alfred O'Shea, who at the start of the First World War left for London to take up a position as a draftsman in a munitions factory. His clarion version of 'Macushla' is especially lovely. And what of the bass Lemprière Pringle (1868-1914), one of the earliest Australian singers to establish himself in Europe and America, heard here in Wagner, as are Florence Austral



Joan Sutherland and fellow Australian singers recalled

and Marjorie Lawrence. The section headed 'Sutherland and her Circle' includes the baritone John Shaw and the bass-baritone Neil Warren-Smith as well as Sutherland herself. Eighty singers in all are featured, quite a roll call and an absolute must-have for anyone even remotely interested in the history of opera on record.

THE RECORDING



From Melba to Sutherland – Australian Singers on Record
Eloquence (B) (4)
482 5892

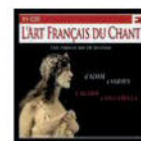


...and from France

From Forlane we have **L'Art Français du Chant**, as healthily representative of ancient French recorded vocal exotica as Eloquence's set is on behalf of the Australians, and there's a good deal more of it, to boot. The 11 CDs are in essence composer led, initially featuring excerpted operas and closing with a selection of *mélodies*. For example the *Manon* selection ranges from Germaine Féraldy in 1928 and Alain Vanzo 30 years later, with the likes of tenor Joseph Rogatchevsky and soprano Martha Angelici in between. Rare repertoire includes *Guercoeur* by Albéric Magnard (baritone Arthur Endrèze, 1933), Alfred Bruneau's *L'attaque du Moulin* (tenor Léon Campagnola, 1913) and Cherubini's *Les Abencérages* (tenor George Thill, 1932). Transfers are in general extremely good.

Thirty-one composers are represented and 69 singers, and as whistle-stop tours of opera on record go, this is one of the best. Certainly the standard of singing is extremely high throughout and the featured voices are more often than not of rare quality.

THE RECORDING



L'Art Français du Chant
Forlane (B) (11)
FOR17014

Rozhdestvensky in Prokofiev: magnificent!

Last year marked the 125th anniversary of **Prokofiev's** birth and a major Melodiya set that slipped through the net gathers together the complete ballet recordings that Gennady Rozhdestvensky made between 1959 and 1990. To call these 'reference recordings', as the hard-back booklet rather modestly does, is at best an understatement. No other conductor focuses these bittersweet, heartfelt, audacious, mischievous and ceaselessly fascinating scores quite as comprehensively as Rozhdestvensky does. *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cinderella* are indeed benchmarks, even though the former is in (very serviceable) mono, both performances combine balletic elegance with visceral excitement. Prokofiev's own 1938 recording of the Second Suite cuts a rugged profile but is mightily impressive all the same. *Chout* promotes the sort of grotesque humour that suggests the visual caricatures of a Searle or a Scarfe, while *The Prodigal Son* is of course the Fourth Symphony in embryo. *On the Dnieper* is full of memorable music, the imposing 'Betrothal' movement especially, and as for *The Stone Flower* – which Prokofiev was working on right up until the end – inventive ideas tumble over themselves, with countless beautiful themes adding to the musical sustenance. Happily Melodiya's presentation is both handsome and durable, with excellent notes, and I have no hesitation in recommending this 125th anniversary edition as among the finest orchestral reissues of the past decade. The transfers are wholly excellent.

THE RECORDING



Prokofiev ballets
Rozhdestvensky
Melodiya (M) (9)
MELCD10 02430

Books



Hugo Shirley enjoys a joint portrait of two post-Wagnerians:

'Mahler likened himself and Strauss to "two miners digging a tunnel from opposite sides and then meeting underground"'



Richard Osborne delves into the history of two great orchestras:

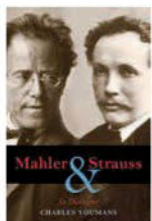
'Although independent of the state, the Berlin Philharmonic quickly came to mirror the aggressive "Made in Germany" brand'

Mahler & Strauss: In Dialogue

By Charles Youmans

Indiana University Press, 310pp, HB, £28.99

ISBN 978-0-25302-159-5



One of the most fascinating questions regarding Austro-German music in the post-Wagnerian era is how – and why – it could produce two composers as different as Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler. But Charles Youmans's new book digs down to the roots of this apparent incompatibility to present a joint portrait that manages, paradoxically, both to draw out their many similarities and to emphasise those differences.

He starts off by elucidating the challenges that faced him in writing such a book, not least the traditional mutual suspicion, in musicological if not music-loving circles, of adherents of one composer for those of the other. Another challenge is how to weave two subjects together while avoiding constant comparisons back and forth.

Rather than seeking to present an overarching narrative, biographical or otherwise, Youmans therefore opts to break his study into 12 themed chapters with titles such as 'Conductors', 'Husbands', 'Wagnerians', 'Literati', 'Metaphysicians' and 'Ironists'. This keeps the structure tidy and manageable. Don't think, however, that it means he attempts to neatly pigeonhole these various elements. There's plenty of interflow between the chapters, which makes for a certain amount of unavoidable repetition – I wondered if the book is best dipped into a chapter here or there at a time – but also serves to emphasise quite how interlinked such themes became for these two artists at the *fin de siècle*.

The family lives of each composer, for example, were of course very different, but the extent to which (and manner in which) they allowed those relationships into their

work goes right to the heart of their attitudes towards their art. For Strauss, such elements, though heartfelt, were employed with a certain objectivity. Mahler, by contrast, wove his life deep into the very fabric of his music. For Strauss, the way he presented his own life – or a carefully edited version of it – was all part of his way of dealing with the doubts inherent to modernity, of the way he negotiated with Wagner and managed to separate that composer's musical means from his philosophical baggage and recouple it to the modern everyday.

Strauss's Wagnerism involved deep and critical engagement with all the composer's philosophical foundations. For Mahler, Youmans notes, such matters were of less concern (or at least there's very little evidence of their having been a major concern), not least because he never followed Strauss's advice to compose operas. Mahler's symphonies are of course philosophically complex, and Youmans, whose previous book was on the philosophical and literary underpinnings of Strauss's orchestral music, doesn't shy away from such complexity. But it becomes clear throughout that their rootedness in a wavering tradition is precisely where much of the fascination in Mahler's symphonies lies. Mahler clung on to Romanticism (paradoxically an essential building block of the most avant-garde modernist movements) while Strauss jettisoned it and found his own route into the 20th century.

Beyond these grander issues, Youmans is also very good on the nitty gritty of the relationship between the two composers. He emphasises their similarly canny ways of doing business: Mahler was every bit as concerned with getting remunerated adequately, as Strauss was, though it's only the latter who is branded a musical mercenary. (Youmans is far from uncritical regarding Strauss but goes some way to addressing some of the standard negative views regarding him.) He describes, too, the genuine friendship between them, as shown in their promotion of one another: Mahler's fighting for *Feuersnot* and *Salome*,

Strauss's role in several important Mahler premieres. He underlines the sheer talent and industry of both men, and the chapter on their work as conductors is fascinating, telling us a great deal about their views on the contested issue of *werktreue*.

At one point Youmans reminds us of an image Mahler used, borrowing from Schopenhauer, likening himself and Strauss to 'two miners digging a tunnel from opposite sides and then meeting underground'. The nearer they get, though, the further apart they also seem to become – or so it feels reading this book. That's just one part of what makes it such a fascinating volume. It's also an impressive achievement in terms of its scholarship (as 100 pages of endnotes testify) and casts a great deal of light on these two composers, both individually and together. **Hugo Shirley**

The Political Orchestra

The Vienna and Berlin Philharmonics

During the Third Reich

By Fritz Trümpi

Translated by Kenneth Kronenberg

University of Chicago Press, 327pp, HB, £35

ISBN 978-0-226-25139-4 (cloth)

ISBN 978-0-226-25142-4 (e-book)



Despite its title, this is not another penny dreadful about music in the Third Reich. First, it is a genuine

work of scholarship; secondly, it is not confined to the years 1933-45. As Dr Trümpi observes, the politicisation of classical music in Germany began, not with the Nazis, but with the 1914-18 war. And his story goes further back than that.

The Vienna Philharmonic began life in 1842 as a fellowship of local musicians who drew their livelihood from the court opera. By the 1880s, this private orchestral association had joined the state-sponsored opera as one of the jewels in Vienna's imperial crown. But already a new creature was on the prowl: Bismarck's German



A work-break concert for employees at the Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) in Berlin, performed by the Berlin Philharmonic under Wilhelm Furtwängler

Reich, which in 1882 spawned its own Philharmonic. Though entirely independent of the state, the Berlin Philharmonic quickly came to mirror the aggressive 'Made in Germany' brand that was now challenging Europe's older industrial, military and cultural hegemonies. Nor was this simply a commercial challenge. The new Reich's Orchestra looked and sounded different: a ferociously competitive, commercially driven outfit whose music-making – 'surging intensity' was one phrase used to describe its playing – was markedly different from that of the Viennese model.

I say 'Reich's Orchestra' because that is what the Berlin Philharmonic became as Germany's star rose and Austro-Hungary's dropped below the horizon. Nowadays 'Reich' suggests 'Third Reich'. Indeed, that is the shorthand used by Canadian scholar Misha Aster as the title of his important but rather more circumscribed study *The Reich's Orchestra: The Berlin Philharmonic 1933-45* (Souvenir Press: 2010). What this newer study reveals is that the orchestra which Joseph Goebbels inherited – and guarded with an assiduity rare among politicians of any age or creed – was a ready-to-go example of that longstanding 'Made in Germany' brand. In foreign policy terms, it was a gift it would have been remiss to ignore. (It's interesting that, having kept a strategic distance from Britain pre-1914, the Berliners became regular visitors in the

1930s and were welcomed back to these shores as early as 1948.)

Dr Trümpi's book began life as a doctoral thesis for the University of Zurich in 2009 and has, I suspect, been little altered for later publication and translation. No matter. Such a wealth of pertinent and finely sifted material about two of Europe's great musical institutions will come as manna from heaven to anyone seriously interested in the subject.

What the study also provides is a much needed sense of proportion. On the Jewish question, though Nazi race laws would eventually play havoc with Germany's economic and intellectual life, classical music (a minority interest for the wider public) was not greatly affected. In 1934 only four members of the Berlin Philharmonic were Jewish. In Vienna in 1938 the number was 11. Astonishingly, no Jewish musicians had been recruited to the Vienna orchestra since 1920, a point that further underlines Dr Trümpi's assertion that the politicisation of music had begun long before the Nazis.

During the years 1933-45 the Vienna Philharmonic was both the more secure ensemble and the more vulnerable, particularly at the time of the *Anschluss* in 1938 when players who had been close to the fiercely anti-German 'Austrofascist' governments of Dollfuss and Schuschnigg were purged by the Nazis. One high-profile Austrofascist who was forced to flee Vienna was the orchestra's controversial

but brilliantly effective chairman Hugo Burghauser, who eventually settled in the United States.

Among the musicians Burghauser brought to Vienna was Arturo Toscanini, a man, Trümpi asserts, who was not anti-Fascist, merely anti-Nazi. This is nonsense. But, then, music historians with an Adorno-like predilection for politics and sociology often have little to say about the actual music or the people who make it. Dr Trümpi mentions Wagner-Régeny's opera *Johanna Balk* which the Vienna Opera staged in 1941. Yet there is not a word about its content – a virulently anti-Fascist piece which, like Wagner-Régeny's *Die Bürger von Calais* premiered in Berlin in 1939, completely evaded the gaze of the censors. The fact is, the Germans (unlike the Soviets) were ill-equipped to set up, let alone run, a fully functioning totalitarian state. Their power lay in their industrial might, whose most appalling manifestation would be the delivery of the Holocaust itself.

There are other omissions. There is little here about the orchestras' involvement with radio and the gramophone, subjects of which the author appears to have a somewhat hazy grasp. Nonetheless, this is a cleverly counterpointed and superbly researched study which adds much to our understanding of the real histories and essential characters of these two great orchestras. **Richard Osborne**

Classics RECONSIDERED



Harriet Smith and **Richard Bratby** revisit the Gramophone Award-winning DG recording of Brahms's Piano Quintet featuring Maurizio Pollini and the Quartetto Italiano



Brahms

Piano Quintet in F minor, Op 34

Maurizio Pollini *pl* **Quartetto Italiano**

DG Originals ® 474 839-2. From 2531 197

The combination of such notable musicians arouses high hopes, and this is indeed a fascinating performance, even though not all my hopes were realized. Pollini is, or seems, very much in the driving seat. This is partly due to the rather variable balance which quite often makes the piano sound close and the strings a long way off. When Pollini is letting fly you cannot always hear the lower strings; too often you feel that he

is a soloist, the strings the accompaniment. It must be added that most of the slow movement sounds like a piano solo because it is written that way (and how beautifully Pollini plays it), but he does sometimes seem to dominate when equality would be preferable. Rubato occasionally seems excessive. Many musicians tend to play a little faster when the music is moving in semiquavers than when it is moving in longer notes, but the tendency is exaggerated in the first movement, most markedly early on in the development when the tempo is so slow that tension

evaporates. I prefer the performance by Werner Haas and members of the Berlin Philharmonic Octet (Philips). The balance is better (and not only because the pianist is more restrained at climaxes), and with less wayward tempos the tension is preserved more consistently. Yet there is some marvellous playing by the pianist on the new disc, and the *Scherzo* is particularly exciting. I'm sure the Quartetto Italiano were very good too – they always are, but my rough notes show that I didn't notice them so often. Which I suppose is significant. **Roger Fiske** (9/80)

Harriet Smith Critics are fickle souls! In the initial review of this 1979 recording, in the September 1980 *Gramophone*, Roger Fiske was a touch hesitant: 'I'm sure the Quartetto Italiano were very good too – they always are – but my rough notes show that I didn't notice them so often. Which I suppose is significant.' But by the following March this recording had won the 1981 Chamber Award by a landslide and he was much more upbeat: 'He dominates this Brahms...at times perhaps a little more than he should, but this does give the performance a special quality.'

But relistening to it in the cold light of 2017, it strikes me that Pollini has photobombed the Italianos. They hardly get a look in! What do you think, Richard, having come fresh to this particular performance?

Richard Bratby It's tricky. I have a string player's instinctive wariness of superstar pianists 'doing' the chamber repertoire. On the other hand, who wouldn't want to hear what Pollini has to say in this huge, impassioned symphony of a Piano Quintet? You can certainly understand the artistic

rationale behind this particular pairing, and why the Quartetto Italiano – nearing the end of a remarkable 35-year career – would respond to the opportunity to work with a pianist of such freshness and charisma.

But yes; what our colleagues said then, and what you say now, was exactly my reaction upon hearing this account for the first time. They've gone and recorded the whole thing as if it was a concerto. The quartet sounds distant and at times almost apologetic: one of the century's greatest chamber ensembles, reduced to a backing group for what is very much the Maurizio Pollini show.

HS That's a pretty terrifying image – Pollini in sequined jumpsuit. But perhaps it's significant that – correct me if I'm wrong – this is his only chamber-music recording. He's very much a solitary creature except when he's with an orchestra. Which might explain the fact that here the quintet has become a concerto. But even where the piano is clearly supposed to be accompanying he's there, larger than life. In the piano *espressivo* passage, for instance (0'56"), the second violin's

all-important line is barely audible. But I do find the development section (from 7'30") mesmerising – the sense of focus, the gradations of *piano* and *pianissimo* and the way they build up to climaxes – it sounds entirely inevitable.

RB Good point about Pollini and chamber music – but the Italianos almost never recorded with 'guest' performers either, and it's fascinating that a group that was so intensely focused upon its identity as an ensemble should end up working with such a lone wolf. 'Larger than life' certainly covers Pollini's playing here, and looking at it from one perspective, that does solve one common problem with piano quintet recordings. There's no question of the bottom register becoming congested in big tuttis, because where there's any direct competition Pollini's left hand is always front and centre and Franco Rossi's cello simply vanishes behind it. I missed any real sense of *pizzicato* colour during the development section passage you mention, though I agree, the feeling of a slowly gathering storm is certainly compelling: the balance issues fade into the background.



Maurizio Pollini joined the Quartetto Italiano for this one-off chamber-music recording



Whatever our reservations, I suspect that neither of us finds this recording dull!

HS Ah yes, those *pizzicatos* are virtually under the radar. Certainly not dull, but I do find the slow movement – often singled out as a highlight – problematic. Not just because of the ‘backing group’ balance but because, though it sounds as if the Italianos are reacting to Pollini, I don’t feel he’s giving anything much back. They could almost have been tracked on afterwards. Yes, the piano line is beautifully played, per se. But to me that extraordinarily intense ardour (for example at 6’55”) to which Brahms rises time and again here

isn’t there – and the intensity of the passage that follows, with those octave leaps in the strings (7’26”) is almost comically unbalanced, with the strings completely overwhelmed by Pollini’s too much too soon *crescendo*.

RB And yet our colleague Trevor Harvey (6/87) found this movement ‘marvellous’ – for the pianism, anyway. There are some lovely things here: I do like the way Pollini rings out those repeated Bs after 2’35” like the tolling of a bell (shame you can’t really hear the cello and first violin with him, though we’re getting used to that by now). But I’m interested that you feel it sounds a bit fake – looking at my notes, I see I’ve written ‘strings artificially remote’. And yes, that passage at 7’26”: I’d have thought the piano needs to emerge from amidst those leaping strings rather than stride over their heads as Pollini does here. I’m not always sure how useful it is to recall that Brahms originally conceived this work as a string quintet, but surely there needs to be more sense of a single ensemble, a unified texture, than we get here?

HS I totally agree – the notion of a single ensemble, as you put it, is glaringly absent here. I wonder, had this recording been made now rather than nearly 40 years ago, how it would have fared. At the time its *Scherzo* was seen as particularly blazing

and I must say I love the way they creep into this and then really let rip in the *fortissimo* section, while the *fugato* section has such intensity of purpose – you can tell they’re supreme Beethovenians here. The contrast with the Trio is very effective, in part because the Italianos, sparing in their vibrato for much of the *Scherzo*, now indulge themselves, to wonderful effect. It’s luscious! And the lead-back into the *Scherzo* is another highlight – it’s judged to a nicety.

RB Yes – luscious! And I’ve got to say, in both the *Scherzo* and the finale, when all five players are going full tilt, it really catches fire. There’s a real sweep not only to the closing section of the *Scherzo* but also the coda of the last movement: you can feel them all leaning into the final *Presto*, and the music pulling forward, gathering weight as well as speed. And when the Italianos are powering away *fortissimo*, the overall balance is more-or-less passable, too. But then, you hear passages like the *poco sostenuto* introduction to the finale, where the quartet is like a coiled spring – taut, yet intensely expressive – and you realise just how much better this recording could, and should, have been. I don’t know. There’s so much here that’s still compelling despite everything; such ardent musicality. Are we just going to write the whole thing off?

HS And in that *poco sostenuto* introduction the Italianos make you so aware of the aura of Beethoven’s late quartets hovering over the proceedings. The pacing of the finale as a whole is, as you say, a thing to behold, while the *Un pochettino più animato* (3’12”) is very finely done – at least until we reach *forte* and then Pollini starts to overwhelm things again. We’re beginning to sound like a broken record! But the balance is a real shame because at its best, this is a remarkable performance and never at any point is Pollini fazed by the fearsome demands of Brahms’s keyboard writing. The best things from these five players are mighty indeed – this is deeply thought playing, which gives it tremendous nobility as well as fire. But for me, in the end, pianist and quartet are not sufficiently musically integrated for it to be a classic.

RB And yet it definitely leaves an impression. You’re dead right: only a Pollini completist could ever regard this as their sole library choice for the Brahms Piano Quintet. I can’t get past that lack of integration either. But it is what it is: a one-off, a flawed but fascinating document of an unrepeatable musical encounter. I’m certainly glad to have got to know it. **G**

THE SPECIALIST'S GUIDE TO...

Forgotten Romantic violin concertos

When it comes to violin concertos, concert programme content is pretty predictable. **Jeremy Nicholas** throws down the gauntlet to those responsible with a selection of lesser-known works showcased on disc

Four years ago, my late colleague Duncan Druce sought in this space to raise awareness of neglected 19th-century violin concertos (2/13). Despite the continued committed advocacy of some of

the most inspiring soloists of our times, few concert programmers have taken up the gauntlet. If you want to hear a violin concerto written in the 19th or early 20th century, you will have a narrow choice of

the Beethoven, Mendelssohn (E minor), Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Bruch (G minor) or Sibelius. These are the copper-bottomed, bums-on-seats violin concertos.

Occasionally, we catch a glimpse of others, such as the Dvořák, Saint-Saëns No 3, Wieniawski's Second, Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy*, Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*, and sometimes the Glazunov or one by Vieuxtemps (Nos 4 or 5). Even the relatively well-known Goldmark rarely gets an airing (it was last heard at the London Proms in 1911). Yet the Romantic period was the most prolific in music history for new violin concertos. Of course, not all of these deserve a place at the top table, but why are so few of the best of them overlooked and/or rarely played? Is it because of valuable rehearsal time being spent on an unfamiliar score? Is it the unwillingness of conductors to investigate them? Or are there simply too few high-profile violinists interested in championing forgotten works?

Whatever the reason, violinists, like their pianist counterparts, seem forever condemned to play the same small number of concertos again and again – most of them masterpieces, to be sure – without bringing their skills to bear on the guilty pleasures of some of the works discussed here, on the page opposite. Druce's selection and mine have only one duplication between them (and even that – the Ernst – is through a different recording). My selection could have been many times longer, with omissions such as the concertos by Gade, Svendsen, Arensky, Lyapunov and Holter (his A minor Concerto, with all its flaws, has a gorgeous slow movement). Minor composers sometimes produce major works. So here is a second tranche of overlooked fiddle concertos that music lovers are deprived of hearing on a regular basis in concert. **G**



Henri Vieuxtemps left us seven violin concertos of which only Nos 4 and 5 are occasionally heard, but do try No 1!



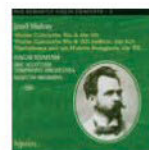
Ernst
'Pathétique' Violin Concerto
Aaron Rosand *vn* Luxembourg
RO / Louis de Froment
VoxBox (3/73)

Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst's one-movement concerto, premiered by him in 1846, is his most ambitious work. Virtuosos ignore it today in the belief that its immense difficulties outweigh its aesthetic value (even Ernst found it a challenge). Jascha Heifetz played it in public from the age of 12, and its soaring melodies and finger-breaking bravura can still cast a spell in the right hands – as on the venerable recording by Aaron Rosand, who brings a white-hot intensity to the final pages.



Moszkowski
Violin Concerto
Charles Tregler *vn* Louisville
Orchestra / Jorge Mester
Soundmark Records

This work (early 1880s), with its coherent large-scale structure, skilful orchestration and wealth of melodic invention – contradicts the view that Moszkowski merely wrote salon trifles. Thomas Christian (Koch Schwann, nla) conveys even more intensely than Tasmin Little (Hyperion) the essence of this most lyrical (and thrilling) of fiddle concertos, but despite the less polished orchestral support, Tregler's 1974 premiere recording is the most emotionally engaging of the three.



Hubay
Violin Concerto No 3
Hagai Shaham *vn* BBC SSO /
Martyn Brabbins
Hyperion (8/03)

Jenő Hubay was a pupil of both Joachim and Vieuxtemps, and he studied composition with Liszt. In this, the most popular of his four concertos, elements of all three mentors are reflected in some measure. It has been recorded several times, but Hagai Shaham, a Hubay 'grandpupil', is unrivalled in the penetrating tone and clear affection he lavishes on this music, matched every step of the way by the industrious Brabbins and his versatile Scottish players.



Conus
Violin Concerto
Jascha Heifetz *vn* RCA Victor
SO / Izler Solomon RCA (9/55)
Julius Conus (1869-1942) was

a pupil of Arensky. His magnum opus is in E minor, the same key as the Mendelssohn, though its conventional three movements are played without pause. Once equalling the Tchaikovsky in popularity, it was premiered in 1898 and championed by Kreisler in the early 1900s, but was only brought to international attention by Heifetz, who made this definitive and unmissable recording in 1952. Ravishing themes, much brilliance, entertaining virtuoso fireworks.



Reinecke
Violin Concerto No 2
Ingolf Turban *vn* Bern SO /
Johannes Moesus
CPO

Like Moszkowski, Carl Reinecke is best known for his piano music but was also an accomplished violinist. Composed in 1876, his G minor Concerto (perhaps inspired by Bruch's) was written for and dedicated to his friend Joseph Joachim – who played it just once, in 1876. No other violinist appears to have taken it up until 2004, when Ingolf Turban made a convincing case for a work that celebrates the songful rather than the showman qualities of the violin.



Wieniawski
Violin Concerto No 1
Michael Rabin *vn*
Philharmonia Orchestra /
Adrian Boult

Testament (1/58)
Remarkably, Henryk Wieniawski wrote this at the age of 17. It has never rivalled the popularity of his Concerto No 2 in D minor, but with several high-profile champions on disc, No 1 in F sharp minor should be better known to a wider audience. To my mind, Rabin with Boult in 1957 is one of the great recordings of a Romantic violin concerto, the epitome of all one expects from such a work – electrifying, moving, magisterial, exultant.



Karłowicz
Violin Concerto
Tasmin Little *vn* BBC Scottish
Symphony Orchestra /
Martyn Brabbins

Hyperion
Mieczysław Karłowicz began his career as a solo violinist but soon realised it was not one that suited his temperament. The writing of this earworm concerto, though, shows how well he knew the instrument, placing considerable technical demands on the soloist. Tasmin Little tosses these aside with her customary aplomb, but it's the central Romanza, providing an oasis of lyrical calm, that really grabs the attention.



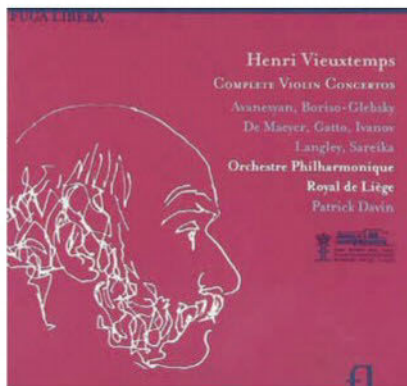
Bruch
Violin Concerto No 2
Itzhak Perlman *vn*
Israel PO / Zubin Mehta
Warner Classics (6/88)

This one is not exactly unrepresented on disc, but no matter how many times it finds its way into the studio, its appearances in the concert hall remain few and far between. The enduring popularity of Bruch's No 1 in G minor is understandable, but in many ways No 2 in D minor is the more personal (some would even say better) work. Perlman's 1986 recording captures its yearning introspection to perfection while reminding us that it was written as a virtuoso vehicle for Sarasate.



Raff
Violin Concerto No 2
Michaela Paetsch Neftel *vn*
Bamberg Symphony /
Hans Stadlmair Tudor

Those who know Joachim Raff's Piano Concerto will hope that a violin concerto by him might be of the same standard. His Op 206 (1877) falls not far short with a wealth of attractive ideas – a solo part that alternates brilliance (there's dazzling *moto perpetuo* material in the first movement) with elegiac introspection (try the *Adagio*). Paetsch Neftel's stunning technique, secure intonation and appealing musicality are superbly partnered by Stadlmair and the Bamberg Symphony.



Vieuxtemps

Violin Concerto No 1
Vineta Sareika *vn* Liège Royal Philharmonic Orchestra / Patrick Davin
Fuga Libera (10/11)

Vieuxtemps's Concertos Nos 4 and 5 have been much recorded, unlike No 1 in E major, the work that set the seal on the Belgian's long and brilliant career (like Chopin's two piano concertos, No 1 was actually written after No 2). Eugène Ysaÿe, his most celebrated pupil, praised it extravagantly. The majestic opening of its lengthy first

movement was applauded at its premiere in 1840 before Vieuxtemps had even shouldered his instrument. Latvian Vineta Sareika sails through the monumental difficulties with disarming ease while singing the work's memorable themes with a rare lyrical grace, ebulliently partnered by Davin and the Liège players.

THE GRAMOPHONE COLLECTION

Verdi's *Macbeth*

With its special focus on the dramatic and two quite different versions dated almost two decades apart, this opera has seen a wide range of interpretations. **Mike Ashman** selects from the rich pickings available

With *Macbeth*, Verdi – at a relatively early stage of his career, and still in his self-named ‘anni di galera’ – was firmly committed to creating what a later age would call ‘music theatre’. He had not yet seen the play on stage when he considered setting it for the Florence carnival season of 1847 as his first fully realised Shakespeare project. But he was already a fanatic of the playwright. The three recent Italian versions to which he may have had access were far from perfect, either as literal translations or as correct editions of what Shakespeare wrote, but he could confidently assure his intended librettist, Venetian poet Francesco Maria Piave, that ‘this tragedy is one of the greatest creations of man’.

He gave Piave a hard time, bullying him for ‘few words’ in ‘concise style’ and employing Andrea Maffei to rewrite and tidy up. The two principal soloists were also faced with radical and difficult demands. About ‘Lady’ (as he often called the role of Lady Macbeth), Verdi wrote that her voice should be ‘rough, hollow, stifled...the chief pieces of the opera are two: the duet between Lady and her husband and the sleepwalking scene and these pieces must not be sung at all: they must be acted and declaimed in a voice that is hollow and veiled; without this the whole effect is lost. Orchestra with mutes.’ Felice Varesi, the first Macbeth, was constantly urged to pay more attention to text and drama than to the music.

Florence was a most suitable place for the premiere because of its theatre’s high technical reputation and experience with operas of the ‘genere fantastico’ like *Robert le diable* (of which Verdi was envious) and *Der Freischütz* (which he admired). It could give Verdi the stage effects he sought and had seen in a London production of the

play. For Paris in 1865 he agreed to rework the opera, at the ‘risk’ of ‘a patchwork’ of styles. In addition to the Act 3 ballet for the witches (but with a strictly non-dancing Hecate) and some basic retouchings, he added a new Act 2 aria for Lady Macbeth (‘La luce langue’), substantial alterations and a new duet for the Macbeths in Act 3 (‘Ora di morte’), a new opening chorus of ‘exiles’ for Act 4 (‘Patria oppressa’) and an entirely new ending. A choral hymn of victory (‘Macbeth, Macbeth ov’è?’), launched with a marching song of triumph of almost Brechtian irony, replaced Macbeth’s solo *arioso* ‘Mal per me’.

THE RECORDINGS

The selection in this survey will lean towards available mainstream and better-recorded versions of the work. Unless otherwise stated, they are of the widely preferred Paris 1865 version, mostly omitting the Act 3 ballet. Today’s productions still sometimes allow themselves to interpolate ‘Mal per me’ before the Paris finale, a kind of composite *Don Giovanni* solution which jars with the new ending.

A full listing of post-1945 recordings would begin with a contribution each from three great singing actresses: Martha Mödl (1950), Astrid Varnay (1951) and Maria Callas, the blazing new comet of the Italian opera world. However, we begin with just the Callas, successive reissues of which, despite the fiery if over-romantic conducting of **Victor De Sabata**, suffer from a sound quality not too far out of its pirated December 1952 radio origins. With her constant sacrifice for its own sake of *bel canto* to the drama, Callas (from what you can hear) is of course the perfect ‘Lady’ – no lack of Verdi’s ideal ‘hollow and veiled’ tones here. And her Macbeth,



Enzo Mascherini, is not as bad in contrast to her as early discoverers of another Callas triumph wanted to make out. But listen rather to the big solo scenes (a kind of Lady M’s ‘greatest hits’) on a September 1958 studio recording with conductor Nicola Rescigno, produced by Walter Legge (‘Callas Portrays Verdi Heroines’).

In the 1959 RCA recording based on a live cast from New York’s Metropolitan Opera, **Erich Leinsdorf** keeps the show moving at well-run-in and unexceptionably sensible fastish tempos (he must have been



Another 19th-century view of Shakespeare's drama - 'The Witches in Macbeth' by Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps (1803-60)

a useful conductor of 78s), but there is little flexible Italian sap in his conducting. The cast know how to put themselves over for the microphones (as does their producer) but, Carlo Bergonzi's star Macduff aside, their 'sap' is employed in foreign (non-Italian) styles. Leonard Warren's energy can be melodramatic (try his seeing Banco's ghost at the Act 2 party, or his sneaking of an unwritten high note into the last act's 'Pietà, rispetto, amore'). Later he gets his own special acoustic to add 'Mal per me'. Try 'La luce langue'

to hear best how Leonie Rysanek's Lady makes Verdi's lines fit what she does best (that Straussian top!). Through her stiff Italian and rather slow-speaking vocalism she makes some attempt at the vocal harshness Verdi wanted.

Wolfgang Sawallisch came in August 1964 to the Salzburg Festival to accompany one of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's essays as the Scottish king. Orfeo's transfer of the radio tapes emphasises the brutality that both men seem to think passes for *slancio* in early-19th-century Italian opera.

There's some shouting, unmotivated *accelerandos* and *subito* accents – and untogther witches. Meanwhile, Grace Bumbry's soprano/mezzo is delivering a most musical if oversophisticated Lady. Overall, though, there's nothing really worth waiting for here.

The 1964 Decca set under **Thomas Schippers** is now only available as a Urania download. Andrew Porter (4/65) identified no less than 17 cuts from old Italian house tradition (much witchery is trimmed), but this is still worth seeking



Giuseppe Sinopoli's Berlin Macbeths, Mara Zampieri and Renato Bruson, recorded for Philips

out: for Schippers's pacy and acquired natural Italian conducting (only the finale seems a mismatch of different takes); for Birgit Nilsson's continually adventurous Lady (at the service of Verdi's instructions rather than her own vocal borders); and for Giuseppe Taddei – on a shortlist for the best Macbeth. From the start, Taddei brings all the colour you could want to create a character of real psychological struggle. He understands the Verdi-Piave 'Giorno non vidi mai sì fiero e bello' immediately as Shakespeare's 'So foul and fair a day', and you feel already in this first scene his growing fear of the future prophesied for Banco's children.

Karl Böhm, no less, mounted a Verdi anniversary festival in the middle of the Second World War from which the opera's earliest known complete recording was taken. Remaining an enthusiast for working

with leading Italian-repertoire artists, he conducted his third *Macbeth* in Vienna in 1970 with Sherrill Milnes and Christa Ludwig. On this live recording, the Vienna Philharmonic's brass and lower strings have a weightier sound than their Italian counterparts, but Böhm is not given to sudden expressive points to fake an Italian style and sounds at one with the drama. A surprise at the end of an evening featuring the Paris version flings us suddenly back to the Florence ending and an emotional 'Mal per me' from Milnes (who is most spirited, but heard in better detail on the Muti studio set). Ludwig is totally in command of the role technically, but the default grandeur that serves, say, her Fricka and her Waltraute so well is not especially an asset for Macbeth's consort. Karl Ridderbusch is a colossal Banco.

BEST ORIGINAL VERSION

BBC Sgrs and Concert Orch / Matheson

Opera Rara ORCV301

The committed Matheson performance from 1979 – part of a series of 'original'



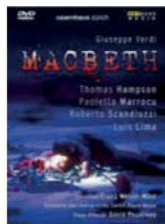
Verdi with mostly leading British artists of the day – makes a strong case for the excitement of Verdi's first thoughts as a dramatic sequence.

BEST DVD

Zurich Op / Welser-Möst

ArtHaus Musik 101 563

David Pountney has directed several



productions of this opera. The Zurich DVD feels like a meeting of happy inspirations from design team, local chorus and orchestra and solo casting. It has all the excitement of a good thriller.

THE 1970s: AND A FEW FIRSTS

Also from 1970 comes the set under a workaday **Lamberto Gardelli** that *Gramophone* (9/71) dubbed '*Macbeth* without the Lady', praising the version's edition (Paris uncut, including the Act 3 ballet in the witches' second scene) but bemoaning the uneven vocal condition of Elena Souliotis. It would be healing to make a case for the sounds made by the vocally struggling soprano as matching up to Verdi's anti-*bel canto* instructions. She clearly understands the role well emotionally, but there is too much uncomfortable listening. Put that alongside Fischer-Dieskau's struggles to give full value to louder passages in (for example) the Act 3 duet and you have a set that is of historical interest only for its first-time-ever completeness and for the (not necessarily relevant) beauty of Luciano Pavarotti singing Macduff's aria 'Ah, la paterna mano', rather removed from its dramatic meaning.

The first officially recorded filming of *Macbeth* came from Glyndebourne in 1972, conducted by **John Pritchard**. In isolation from what's around them, the acting and singing performances of Josephine Barstow (ever clear of obsessive intention) and Kostas Paskalis (less subtle but undeniably charismatic) are to enjoy. But much else, from the conventional high-walled scenery to the foursquare blocking of movement (or non-movement), becomes an object lesson in how to make a piece boring. The DVD's ageing TV source is visually no great shakes either.

The later 1970s brought a scrupulously prepared first recording of the opera's Florence original by a New Zealander long steeped in Verdi lore. Indeed, the work done here by **John Matheson** to 'spook up' the strings of the BBC Concert Orchestra for the second witches' meeting could on its own give the lie to the annoying mockery of those scenes by (especially English) critics – even Julian Budden, in his seminal *The Operas of Verdi* (Praeger: 1973), wrote: 'Verdi's witches, like Shakespeare's, are out of St Trinian's.'

CONTROVERSIAL CHOICE

Deutsche Op, Berlin / Sinopoli

Philips 475 8393PM3

Giuseppe Sinopoli was an inconsistent performer both 'live' and in the studio, but



early Verdi always seemed a natural match for him. The dark colour he found in this piece and his interventionist coaching of his solo team are exceptional.

To hear the first version of the opera this freshly prepared and delivered – nowhere more so than in Rita Hunter's brilliantly negotiated performance of 'Trionfai!', the ferocious Act 2 cabaletta later replaced by 'La luce langue' – is to hear how in retrospect, in the opera's original structure, the younger Verdi's energy and initiative more than compensate for any immaturity.

The received view of the differences between the two Italian-led versions in 1976 has been that the **Claudio Abbado** is more symphonic, calm and sophisticated and the **Riccardo Muti** is wilder, more brash and gutsy. The pronounced difference is surely between a project based on a stage show – Abbado's, on a visually seductive Giorgio Strehler production (televised but still not officially released for the small screen) – and an assembly for the studio. Muti's fire of those days is put to good use: the sharp accents, the thwacks of his timpanist, the strong pulses of the accompaniments are the real version of the fake Italian style attempted by some non-Italians; and it's all achieved with a London concert orchestra and chorus. His cast, however, are often in need of stronger dramatic guidance than their own desires to sing beautifully and truly. Compare 'Pietà, rispetto, amore' on the two sets. Although Muti's accompaniment has the edge regarding the piece's tired ironic farewell to life, Milnes just concentrates on preserving beautiful singing; Abbado and Piero Cappuccilli, on the other hand, provide the whole package. It's even true of the choral climax at the end – a well-achieved high note in the Muti versus a moving cry of relief in the Abbado, even though the latter has allowed his Macbeth to insert 'Mal per me'. In the Muti version, however, someone (perhaps the superb Fiorenza Cossotto) had the idea of the Lady reading the letter to herself almost *sotto voce*, an inspired change from the usual declaimed version.

INTO THE 1980S AND BEYOND

Giuseppe Sinopoli's 1983 Berlin recording (which would lead to a stage production by Luca Ronconi in 1987 recorded for DVD) has a leading Italian baritone (Renato Bruson) encouraged to be anything but pretty in front of the microphones and a controversial Lady (Mara Zampieri) whose vocal production earned some disrespectful comparisons with the Souliotis recording. But Zampieri's tonal 'exaggerations' seem deliberate in following Verdi's character hints. Sinopoli goes a stage further than any recorded conductor so far in taking this opera into the dark *Schauerromantik*-type sound world of *Der Freischütz*, where it fits well. Try the *banda's* intentionally primitive



Thomas Hampson is Macbeth in Zurich

sound in that creepily long interlude as Duncan arrives at the Macbeths', or the chilling accompaniment as Macbeth thinks he sees a dagger in front of him. It's like an original-instrument performance on modern instruments, and there's a valuable witchy sound in the ballet as well. Bruson, Zampieri and Sinopoli can make even the Abbado and Muti readings sound a bit too lush.

A decade after Abbado and Muti came **Riccardo Chailly** with his (then) own Bologna forces and a strong cast (Leo Nucci,

Shirley Verrett) for a Claude d'Anna film. But the result is not thrilling. Alan Blyth (6/87) found Verrett under strain, regretted Nucci's tendency to oversing and found Chailly's conducting 'direct, unfussy and keen'. I very much agree – as well as noting that the chorus is rather poor.

Live from the Martina Franca festival in 1997 with a young cast, **Marco Guidarini** has another go at the Florence version. Detailed edition differences between this and the Matheson performance are due to varied scholarly research, but this probably doesn't account for Guidarini's strange slow shaping of Lady Macbeth's 'Trionfai!', which sounds like a different number in Iano Tamar's admittedly capable hands compared with the fireworks achieved by Hunter. But if you can't find the Matheson, this release, with its strong young Macbeth, Yevgeny Demerdjiev, is a potent alternative.

Years later, in 2013, *Macbeth* sounds weird in the rather soft (if certainly singable) translation of the last in the long series of Peter Moores Foundation Chandos Opera in English releases. **Edward Gardner** and his (then) ENO orchestra show off his habitual dramatic nous and Latonia Moore is an exceptional Lady, dramatically and vocally. Intelligence and knowledge in performance compensate for any disappointments with the weight of Simon Keenlyside's title-role. His 'I have sinned' ('Mal per me') is impressively fatal on a three-track appendix adding the 1847 finale to the Paris version.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

DATE / ARTISTS	RECORD COMPANY (REVIEW DATE)
1952 ¹ Callas, ² Mascherini; Scala, Milan / De Sabata	Documents ³ 2 600199; Myto ⁴ 2 MCD00310 (1/94 ^{tr})
1959 ¹ Rysanek, ² Warren; Met Op, New York / Leinsdorf	RCA ³ 2 88697 85576-2 (6/60 ^{tr} , 9/88 ^{tr})
1964 ¹ Bumbry, ² Fischer-Dieskau; Salzburg Fest Chbr Chor, VPO / Sawallisch	Orfeo ³ 2 C843 1121 (7/12)
1964 ¹ Nilsson, ² Taddei; S Cecilia Acad Ch & Orch / Schippers	Urania ³ 2 ⁴ ⁵ WS121 282 (4/65 ^{tr})
1970 ¹ Ludwig, ² Milnes; Vienna St Op / Böhm	Orfeo ³ 2 C766 0821
1970 ¹ Souliotis, ² Fischer-Dieskau; Abrosian Op Chor, LPO / Gardelli	Decca ³ 2 ⁴ ⁵ 478 6583 (9/71 ^{tr} , 7/94)
1972 ¹ Barstow, ² Paskalis; Glyndebourne Fest Op / Pritchard	ArtHaus Musik ³ ⁴ ⁵ DVD 102 316
1976 ¹ Verrett, ² Cappuccilli; Scala, Milan / Abbado	DG ³ 2 449 732-2G0R2 (10/76 ^{tr} , 3/97)
1976 ¹ Cossotto, ² Milnes; Abrosian Op Chor, New Philh Orch / Muti	Warner Classics ³ 2 9029 59348-7 (12/76 ^{tr})
1979 ¹ Hunter, ² Glossop; BBC Sgrs & Concert Orch / Matheson	Opera Rara ³ ⁴ ⁵ 2 ORCV301 (3/04)
1983 ¹ Zampieri, ² Bruson; Deutsche Op, Berlin / Sinopoli	Philips ³ ⁴ ⁵ 475 8393PM3 (10/84 ^{tr} , 2/85 ^{tr})
1986 ¹ Verrett, ² Nucci; Comunale Th, Bologna / Chailly	Decca ³ 2 ⁴ ⁵ 478 3470DMO (6/87 ^{tr}); ³ ⁴ ⁵ DVD 073 4380GH2 (5/93 ^{tr})
1997 ¹ Tamar, ² Demerdjiev; Bratislava Chbr Ch, Italian Intl Orch / Guidarini	Dynamic ³ ⁴ ⁵ 2 CDS194 (8/98)
2001 ¹ Marrocu, ² Hampson; Zurich Op / Welser-Möst	ArtHaus Musik ³ ⁴ ⁵ DVD 101 563 (9/02 ^{tr})
2004 ¹ Guleghina, ² Alvarez; Liceu Th, Barcelona / Campanella	Opus Arte ³ ⁴ ⁵ DVD OA0922D
2006 ¹ Valayre, ² Nucci; Regio Th, Parma / Bartoletti	C Major Entertainment ³ ⁴ ⁵ DVD 722008; ³ ⁴ ⁵ 722104
2007 ¹ Zhuravel, ² Altomare; Marchigiana Lyric Chor & PO / Callegari	Naxos ³ ⁴ ⁵ 2 8 660259/60; ³ ⁴ ⁵ DVD 2 110258
2008 ¹ Guleghina, ² Lučić; Met Op, New York / Levine	EMI ³ ⁴ ⁵ 2 DVD 206304-9
2009 ¹ Urmana, ² Tiliakos; Paris Op / Currentzis	Bel Air Classiques ³ ⁴ ⁵ 2 DVD BAC054; ³ ⁴ ⁵ BAC454
2011 ¹ Monastyrskya, ² Keenlyside; Royal Op, London / Pappano	Opus Arte ³ ⁴ ⁵ DVD OA1063D; ³ ⁴ ⁵ OABD7095D (7/12)
2013 ¹ Moore, ² Keenlyside; ENO / Gardner [sung in English]	Chandos ³ ⁴ ⁵ 2 CHAN3180 (6/14)
2014 ¹ Netrebko, ² Lučić; Met Op, New York / Luisi	DG ³ ⁴ ⁵ 2 DVD 073 5222GH2; ³ ⁴ ⁵ 073 5234GH (1/16)

Key: ¹Lady Macbeth, ²Macbeth

GRAMOPHONE

Choose the right
subscription for you

- THE GRAMOPHONE CLUB
- PRINT EDITION
- DIGITAL CLUB
- DIGITAL EDITION
- REVIEWS DATABASE



THE WORLD'S LEADING CLASSICAL MUSIC REVIEWS MAGAZINE

EXPAND YOUR COLLECTION

With the world's most authoritative classical music reviews section, written by our unrivalled, international and objective panel of expert reviewers

INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS

We are devoted to exploring the artists stamping their mark on recording today, with captivating features and exclusive interviews

COMPOSER PROFILES

We celebrate composers both past and present, providing you with a unique perspective on the lives and work of the greats of the classical music world

THE GRAMOPHONE CLUB

Our best value package includes 13 print issues, digital access to every issue since 1923 and over 30,000 reviews, plus exclusive offers throughout the year

Visit www.magsubscriptions.com/gramophone
or call **0800 137 201** (UK) **+44 (0)1722 716997** (OVERSEAS)

Pictured: Jonas Kaufmann (© Sony Classical/Julian Hargreaves/Nessun Dorma - The Puccini Album 2015) who featured on the July 2015 cover of Gramophone. Full annual retail price for print only (13 issues) is £74.75; print only annual subscription, Digital Edition and reviews Database (£64); Digital Club (£84); Gramophone Club (£106). Postage and packaging is not included for overseas orders. Overseas subscription p&p: Europe £22.80, Rest of World £27.00. If you have a subscription enquiry then please email subscriptions@markallengroup.com

NEW MILLENNIUM: A SPATE OF DVDS

The first DVD of the 2000s, David Pountney's production from Zurich with **Franz Welser-Möst**, provides an object lesson in challenging transparent modern staging. Every idea seems a smart one, starting with the sexy yet buttoned-up costume for Paoletta Maroccu's scene-stealing Lady whose complete unbeautiful assumption of the character silences any vocal criticism. A flexible mobile stand with a top floor obviates instantly the necessity of creating mock 11th-century castles. Costumes are inventively mixed period. Humour is not excluded (see the witches – but they're weird as well), nor are clever ideas (the disguised 'women' who murder Banco), and the principal cast is totally engaged in the show. Thomas Hampson's acting (exceptional in close-up) and Lieder experience make up for any shortcomings of vocal weight. Welser-Möst is yet again convincing in a style you might not expect him to have absorbed.

A Phyllida Lloyd staging has been recorded in both Barcelona (2004, under **Bruno Campanella**) and London (2011, under **Antonio Pappano**). Barcelona has a weightier cast (Carlos Alvarez and Maria Guleghina) but a weaker chorus and ensemble work – the last important in a concept that recalls Verdi's memorandum to Paris about the witches being the third main character of the show, with this production using them additionally as Kabuki-style 'invisible' actors, scene-shifters, postmen and rescuers of Banco's son, Fleanzio. Apart from this gloss, and a split bed pointing to the Macbeths' conjugality being eroded by their ambition, the production is straightforwardly narrative-driven and adapts well to different theatres. In London, Pappano's conducting is exceptional for its detail and colour, and a rhythmic interest faithful to the score's combined history. A classic example is his accompanying of Liudmyla Monastyrskya in 'La luce langue'. He also maintains good balance between the soprano's heavyweight and darkly coloured Lady and his more gentle baritone, Simon Keenleyside (who, nonetheless, is still awarded an inserted 'Mal per me').



Piero Cappuccilli crowns Claudio Abbado's recording with La Scala forces

Liliana Cavani's production for Parma (with **Bruno Bartoletti**) has often divertingly freakish staging that makes much of Sylvie Valayre's well-run-in and compelling Lady and actually obeys the libretto (and play) in putting beards on the witches. Also worth watching is **Daniele Callegari's** tight conducting of Pier Luigi Pizzi's design-led staging in the open air at Macerata in 2007 (with a Naxos CD release too). Employing a visual orgy of non-stop black-and-red colours via costumes and set, Pizzi does well to maintain focus in such a wide space. Olha Zhuravel contributes a devilish Lady

TOP CHOICE

La Scala, Milan / Abbado

DG 449 732-2GOR2

The ultimate version is still – only just – the Abbado for its placing of true drama in a sophisticated musical context and the strong overall cast. That said, the Muti – an idiomatic triumph created outside the shores of Italy – remains special.



with a presence and drive similar to Zurich's Maroccu; her Macbeth, Giuseppe Altomare, recovers from a slow start to be both effective and unusually sympathetic. Gheorge Iancu's choreography provides a unique chance to see the Act 3 ballet – but with Hecate also dancing, *pace* Verdi's wish.

Following his policy of eliminating from the stage everything that he regards as superfluous, Dmitri Tcherniakov presents a *Macbeth* (conducted with fire and feeling by **Teodor Currentzis**) that essentially reduces the action to a fantasy of the usurping couple in front of their own fireside. Dimitris Tiliakos and Violeta Urmana (who has a good mid-soprano/mezzo range for the Lady) sound and do well at pretending the opera is going on somewhere else, but the truth is that, until a shock ending when their walls are broken into, it's a boring waste of drama.

Another British stage director's interpretation that has been filmed twice is Adrian Noble's from the Metropolitan. The 2008 issue under **James Levine** is the better bet here because of the maestro's fiery conducting,

fully on a level with his early London-made recordings. The production also is much closer to Noble's and his choreographer's original work, not radical but solidly effective in its modern European costumes. The everyday Hampstead Heath witches (well sung by the Met's lady choristers) are an intriguing foible. By the time **Fabio Luisi** conducted it (2014) it had become the Anna Netrebko show. The ubiquitous Russian soprano has gone further here with vocal style and tessitura than in her 2013 DG recital excerpts – but stage-wise it seems to have become as playful as her public personality. Marilyn Monroe-like blonde wigs and poses do not a serious character make.

Given the composer's focus on the dramatic, it's not surprising that so many recent recordings are of actual performances. Their number has increased with the work's popularity, but *Macbeth* remains something of a specialist interest. The most complete performances are those led by evident fanatics for the piece itself – conductors Matheson, Muti, Abbado, Sinopoli, Levine and Pappano, and director Pountney. **G**

PERFORMANCES & EVENTS

Presenting live concert and opera performances from around the world, and reviews of archived music-making available online to stream when you want, where you want

Komische Oper Berlin & streamed live on Opera Europa

Mussorgsky's Sorochinsky Fair, April 2

Mussorgsky's *The Fair at Sorochinsky* is something of a rarity on the operatic stage, and that's because this was the opera he left unfinished. This opening night of Barrie Kosky's brand new production for Berlin's Komische Oper is the first time the work will have been heard in Berlin since 1948, and it's worth making an effort to experience it, not least because the score itself is a colourful one. Firstly, its combination of drinking songs, dances, folk tales and a wild witches' Sabbath makes for a nicely fast-moving storyline. Then there's the richly folkloric music itself, which includes Mussorgsky's orchestral fantasy, *Night on the Bare Mountain*, expanded into a choral piece and inserted as a dream-sequence of the peasant lad Gritsko, played by Australian tenor Alexander Lewis. Other cast members under the baton of Henrik Nánási include Komische Oper regulars Jens Larsen and Hans Gröning. The opera will then be available free, on demand, for six months on Opera Europa's The Opera Platform.

english.komische-oper-berlin.de,
theoperaplatform.eu

Halle aux Grains, Toulouse & live on Radio Classique

Adam Laloum performs Mozart, April 7

The French pianist Adam Laloum isn't yet such a well-known name on this side of the channel, although he has performed at London's Wigmore Hall and Institut français. However, he's been a popular soloist in France for some years now, as is demonstrated by his being a regular soloist at the major Festival International de Piano de la Roque d'Anthéron. Now British audiences are about to become better acquainted with his playing because last November he signed an exclusive contract with Sony Classical. In the meantime you can hear him in this Toulouse concert which also features Bruckner's Symphony No 6. He'll be performing Mozart's Piano Concerto No 9, K271, under the baton of Joseph Swensen, with the Orchestre du Capitole.

onct.toulouse.fr, radioclassique.fr

St John's Smith Square & BBC Radio 3

Choral Music for Palm Sunday, April 9

Easter at St John's Smith Square this year brings the inaugural Holy Week Festival, the venue collaborating with Tenebrae and Nigel Short to present a week of workshops,

lunchtime performances, evening concerts and late-night liturgical events, exploring a vast range of sacred music for Holy Week. Their evening Palm Sunday performance, broadcast live on BBC Radio 3, sees Nigel Short conduct the BBC Singers in a programme of choral music such as Gibbons's *Hosanna to the Son of David*, Bruckner *Vexilla Regis* and Poulenc's *Vinea mea electa*.

sjss.org.uk, bbc.co.uk/radio3

Grand Théâtre de Provence, Radio Classique & Arte

Festival de Pâques, April 10-23

It's the usual mix of A-list artists and artists who deserve to be better known at violinist Renaud Capuçon's Easter Festival in Aix-en-Provence this year. As we go to press it isn't confirmed which concerts will be broadcast, but we do know that seven concerts across the 10 days will go out live, both on Radio Classique and on the streaming service Arte. There are some major concerts this year too, such as the opening night's performance of *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* from Sir John Eliot Gardiner with the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists, a concert which also marks the launch of their own 450th

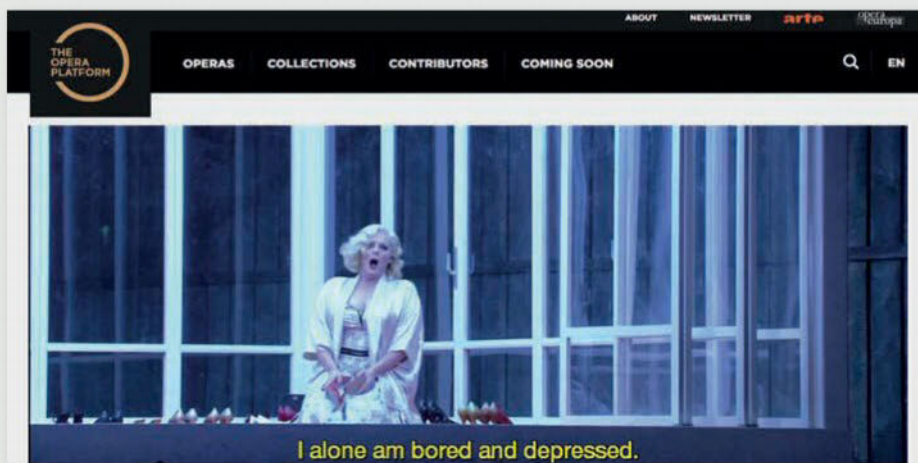
ONLINE OPERA REVIEW

Martin Kušej directs, and Mariss Jansons conducts the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*

Shostakovich

This production of Shostakovich's shabby shocker has been available on Opus Arte since not long after it was unveiled in Amsterdam in 2006. Its appearance on The Opera Platform is very welcome, though: it's a corker, crowned by Eva-Maria Westbroek's compelling performance as Katerina Izmailova (a major breakthrough for her career) and the brilliantly incisive and biting playing of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra under Mariss Jansons.

Nor have I seen anything better from the Austrian director Martin Kušej, who fully embraces the opera's almost animalistic power and drive. The seduction scene – here always bordering on rape – between Katerina and Sergey (an outstanding Christopher Ventris) is brilliantly, shockingly realised. The modern-dress world he creates is semi-abstract but hauntingly real. Katerina herself spends much of her time caged



in a glass box, surrounded by her shoe collection, which sits on dark, damp mud – that mud comes in useful as the body count rises, while a handy stiletto helps Sergey despatch the weedy Zinovy Borisovich.

The large extended cast constitutes a sharply etched gallery of grotesques, against which Westbroek nevertheless

manages to let Katerina's underlying tragedy shine through. She repeated the trick as Turnage's Anna Nicole, but never managed it as impressively as here.

Hugo Shirley

Available to stream for free at theoperaplatform.eu until May 16, and at medici.tv with a subscription

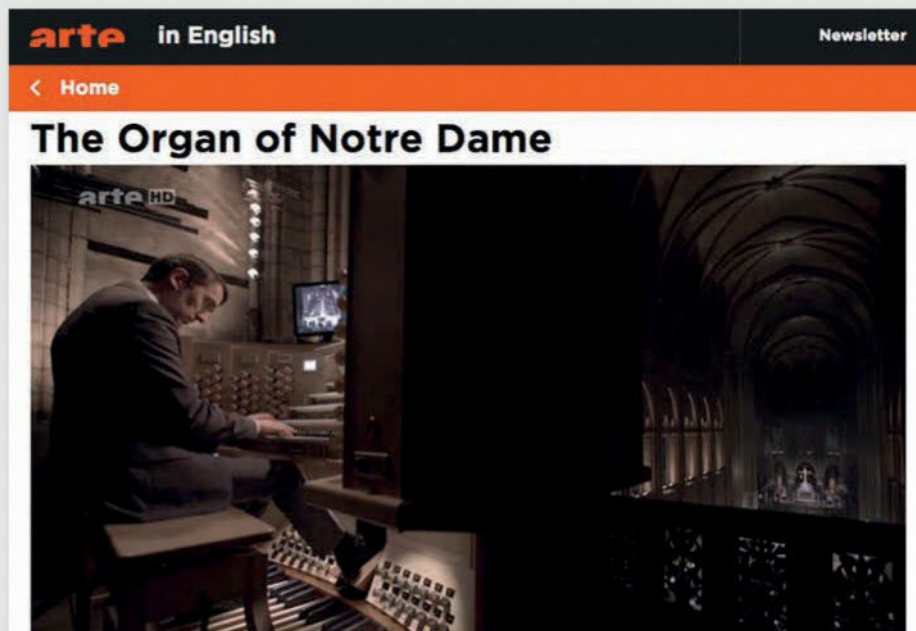
ONLINE DOCUMENTARY REVIEW

The titulaire of Notre-Dame de Paris takes us on a tour of the cathedral's celebrated organ

The Organ of Notre-Dame

Olivier Latry relates how, on the spur of the moment one Sunday at Mass, the Rolls-Royce founder Claude Johnson bought an electric motor for the organ of Notre-Dame and so saved it from a slow death. Isabelle Julien's 53-minute documentary is like a glossy brochure for a Rolls-Royce of an organ. The camera smoothly follows Latry into the guts of the instrument, runs an admiring eye over its 32' Bombarde and ear-splitting *en chamade* reeds, peers over the organist's shoulder and under his bench. Latry gives proper emphasis to his day-job as the latest titulaire in a distinguished line including Vierne, Litaize and Cochereau, who appear in tantalisingly brief clips of grainy footage, and tells a smooth story of the organ's history from Cavaillé-Coll to his own supervision of recently installed echo chambers and chime-stops.

On such a guided tour for organ tourists the music is given secondary value, and none-too-sensitively cut excerpts of Vierne and Dupré, Guilmant and Bach, do no more than hint at Latry's absolute



command of the instrument ('taming the beast', as his teacher Litaize called it) and astonishing fluency as a musician. But as an invitation to pay your own visit, or to get to know discs on DG and Naïve that show

Latry and the Notre-Dame organ to best advantage, the film can be enthusiastically recommended. **Peter Quantrill**

Available to stream for free at arte.tv until May 12.

anniversary worldwide Monteverdi tour. There's also a chance for European audiences to hear The Knights, who could be described as New York's answer to the Aurora Orchestra; they're the resident orchestra for 2017, and one of their concert highlights is Mendelssohn's Concerto for Violin and Piano, with Capuçon and Jean-Yves Thibaudet as soloists.

festivalpacques.com, radioclassique.fr, arte.tv

Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris & live on medici.tv

Morning masterclass from Gautier Capuçon's Classe d'Excellence de Violoncelle, April 16

The French cellist Gautier Capuçon spends more time bringing up the next generation of musicians than most soloists with a concert diary as packed as his. In 2015 he established a special Cello Class at the newly opened Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris, a Frank Gehry-designed arts complex which has a 1000-seater concert hall at its centre, with acoustics by Yasuhisa Toyota. Once a month, for six months each year, he spends three days teaching, playing and advising six young cellists who have auditioned from all over the world. Among the 2015 intake was the Canadian cellist Stéphane Tétreault whose Haydn, Schubert and Brahms recital disc appeared in *Gramophone's* 2016 Critics'

Choice round up. Much happens behind closed doors, but there are also public masterclasses, which are attracting a regular audience. This live morning medici.tv broadcast looks in on the fifth session.

fondationlouisvuitton.fr, medici.tv

Université Lumière Lyon 2, Opéra de Lyon, nomadmusic.fr & France musique

Lyons International Chamber Music

Competition April 19-23

One for those who enjoy the armchair sport that is competition watching, Lyon's International Chamber Music Competition is open to wind quintets this year, and with €22,000 of cash prizes on offer, plus concert engagements and broadcasting opportunities with France Musique, the stakes are high. This year they've made sure that anyone around the world can enjoy the competition, arranging for the semi-final at the Université Lumière Lyon 2 to be broadcast live on the French specialist classical streaming platform, nomadmusic.fr, together with interviews with the contestants, and for the prizewinners' concert at Opéra de Lyon to be rebroadcast at a later date on France musique.

cimcl.fr, francemusique.fr, nomadmusic.fr

St Paul's Chapel, Manhattan, New York & HD web-streamed

Trinity Wall Street's Sunken Cathedral Series marks the Lou Harrison centennial, April 20

Part of Trinity's 'Sunken Cathedral' series which began last month, presenting multiple versions and interpretations of Debussy's *La Cathédrale engloutie* alongside a variety of newer compositions focusing on climate change and water. This live-streamed lunchtime concert focuses on the Lou Harrison centennial, and includes his *Solstice*, performed by Trinity's resident contemporary-music orchestra NOVUS NY.

trinitywallstreet.org

Barbican, London & live on medici.tv

Roth conducts the LSO, April 23

François-Xavier Roth is currently curating a series with the London Symphony Orchestra entitled 'After Romanticism', exploring this important period in music history. This second concert in the series sees them focus on Debussy and Bartók. Firstly Debussy's so-called '10 minutes that changed the musical world', the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. Then, Antoine Tamestit is soloist in Bartók's Viola Concerto, a work which showcases this often-overlooked instrument and explores its capabilities in full. The programme concludes by bringing them into the context of 19th-century Romanticism, with Anton Bruckner's Symphony No 4.

barbican.org.uk, medici.tv

NOVAFIDELITY



NOVAFIDELITY X12

All-in-one HD Digital Music Centre CD (Player/Ripper), Streamer, Radio.

RRP £585.00



NOVAFIDELITY X30

The high-end high-fidelity audio component, smart HD music server/network streamer/CD storage (ripper) powerful amplifier.

RRP from £995.00



For your nearest dealer call 0203 5442338

More fantastic products from NuNu Distribution Limited

www.nunudistribution.co.uk

NuNu Distribution Ltd



HIGH FIDELITY

● THE TECHNOLOGY THAT MAKES THE MOST OF YOUR MUSIC ●

THIS MONTH A flexible network amplifier, Marantz rethinks the whole concept of digital-to-analogue conversion, and could streaming finally be coming of age? **Andrew Everard, Audio Editor**

Players keep on coming in a streaming world

News of CD's demise is clearly premature – but vinyl enjoys a continuing resurgence

Elsewhere in these pages this month, I take another look at the music streaming scene and wonder whether music on demand is the way forward.

However, at the same time comes news from loudspeaker company PMC, the UK distributor of the Canadian-built Bryston range, of the arrival of a new CD player, the £3700 BCD-3 **1**.

Yes, it has digital inputs, but only on S/PDIF and AES sockets, and a network connection (though only for software updates), but this is actually a single-function device – and that function is playing CDs as well as possible, using the architecture developed for the company's BDA-3 DAC. Downstream of the dedicated transport mechanism are two AKM4490 384kHz/32bit DACs, with the transport synchronised to the DAC with a master clock solution of in-house Bryston design.

On the turntable front, the ever-reliable Pro-ject has a new range of variants on its Essential II design, launched last year **2**. The standard version, selling for £239, now comes with an MDF platter for greater stability, while the Essential III A carries



on the acrylic platter of the original design, with the upgraded Acryl-IT E support for the record being played. It costs £279, and there's also a limited edition version carrying an image of the late George Harrison, launched alongside a box-set of the former Beatle's works on vinyl LP.

Not to be outdone, the revived Technics brand has launched a new 'Grand Class' version of its SL-1200 turntable **3**, previously announced in 'limited edition' and 'standard' versions. Available either in silver as the SL-1200GR or in black as the SL-1210GR and selling for £1299, the new version uses the same direct-drive motor developed for the company's turntable revival, along with a 2.5kg platter strengthened with ribs on

the underside and damped with rubber, and a hand-assembled tonearm. The plinth combines Bulk Moulding Compound and aluminium, and specially developed silicon rubber is used in the isolating feet.

And there's more news from the turntable market, with the return of the Dual brand to the UK with three new models at competitive prices **4**. The range starts with the belt-drive, fully-automatic MTR-15 at £125 and moves up to the MTR-75, which uses an enhanced chassis, DC servo motor and aluminium platter. At £250, this model also has a built-in phono stage complete with USB output for recording music using a computer, and comes fitted with an Audio Technica Cartridge.

There's also a direct-drive model designed to appeal to the DJ market, complete with variable speed control, and the company plans to introduce more upmarket CS turntable models later in the year. Incidentally, the company's name harks back to its 1930s gramophones, which offered two ways of being powered: they could either be run on mains electricity or hand-cranked using a clockwork mechanism! **6**

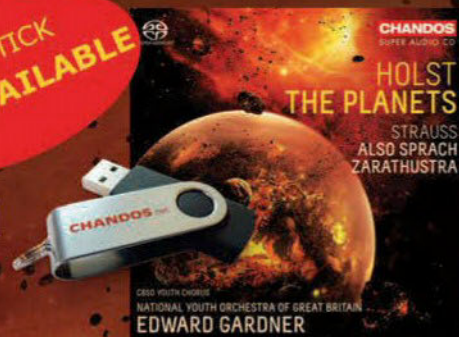
CHANDOS
THE SOUND OF CLASSICAL

**A NEW RELEASE
ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR YOUR HI-FI**

MP3, lossless, Studio, Surround

All formats on a USB stick to make the most of your Hi-Fi!

USB STICK
NOW AVAILABLE



APRIL TEST DISCS



Vivid, exciting performances on this disc of Liszt transcriptions of opera melodies, given a personal twist by Chiyon Wong – and Linn's 192kHz/24bit sound is thrilling.



No, not that *Four Seasons*! Instead, Christopher Simpson's account of the changing landscape is here realised by the Sirius Viols in a breathtaking, demonstration-quality hi-res recording.

● **REVIEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH**

Technics SU-G30

The price may seem high but there's rather more to this Technics amplifier than meets the eye

At times it can seem hard to work out the strategy being followed by the Technics brand since it re-emerged a couple of years ago, to the extent that it can seem to be trying every possible approach in an effort to find out which one 'sticks'. The original high-end 'Reference Class' R1 system used a pre-amplifier with a built-in network player, allied to a massive power amplifier, while the 'Premium Class' 700 series went more conventional, with an integrated amplifier, a separate network device and even a CD player. Then there's the Ottawa system, with its built-in player, amplification and streaming – and that's before one even starts to unravel the now three-strong turntable range.

For its third range, the 'Grand Class' G30, the company has taken yet another approach. The first two products in the line-up are the ST-G30 and the SU-G30 we have here, but this isn't another network player-and-amplifier package: instead the ST-G30 is a CD ripper/network music store and the £2799 SU-G30 combines network music playback and an amplifier with multiple digital inputs, even enabling it to be used with a computer for direct playback.

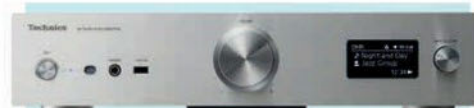
In fact, for an integrated amplifier, albeit one using digital amplification technology, the SU-G30 is light on conventional analogue inputs: there's just one set of

line-ins and a moving magnet phono input (to suit one of the company's turntables, of course). Everything else is digital: it has Wi-Fi and Ethernet connectivity built in, Bluetooth with aptX, AirPlay via its network connection plus two coaxial digital inputs and one optical.

It's perhaps best to view this as an amplifier for the digital music age, while making a few concessions to 'legacy' analogue music formats

It will play file formats up to DSD256/11.2MHz 384kHz/32 bit PCM (depending on how you connect to the music). DLNA network playback is supported, and the SU-G30 can also play music from iOS devices and USB memory via USB Type A or computers using asynchronous USB Type B. Spotify Connect is also built in, and the Technics supports digital radio via the vTuner platform.

So this is very much the modern digital amplifier, and indeed even the analogue inputs go through analogue-to-digital conversion before being handled by the amplifier, which may rather go against the analogue appeal of using a turntable in the first place. But then it's perhaps best to view



TECHNICS SU-G30

Type Network amplifier

Price £2799

Output 50W per channel into 8 ohms, 100Wpc/4 ohms

Analogue inputs One line, mm phono

Digital inputs Two coaxial and one optical, network (Wi-Fi and wired Ethernet), USB Type B for computer, 2x USB Type A for portable and memory devices, Bluetooth with aptX, Apple AirPlay

Other sources Spotify Connect, internet radio

Outputs One pair of speakers, headphones

Tone controls Bass/treble/midband

Format compatibility PCM-based up to 384kHz/32 bit, DSD to DSD256/11.2MHz via USB Type B from computer; to 192kHz/24 bit and DSD128/5.6MHz via DLNA and from USB storage; S/PDIF to 192kHz/24 bit

Accessories supplied Remote handset, wireless antennae, optional control via Technics Music app on Android/iOS

Dimensions (WxHxD) 43x9.8x42.4cm
technics.com/uk/

this as an amplifier for the digital music age, while making a few concessions to 'legacy' analogue music formats: if you want to play records and keep it analogue all the way through to the speakers, there are much simpler – and cheaper – solutions available.

So the SU-G30 may take a different approach to other Technics amplifiers when

HI-FI | HOME CINEMA | AUTOMATED SOLUTIONS



Based conveniently in central Guildford, PJ Hi-Fi has specialised in the demonstration, provision and installation of quality hi-fi and home cinema for over 20 years. Our dedicated demonstration rooms allow you to listen in comfort to a range of exceptional products, whilst our friendly and knowledgeable staff are always on hand to answer any questions you may have. Whether you are looking for your first genuine hi-fi system, want to create a bespoke home cinema or wish to distribute music and movie throughout your house, PJ Hi-Fi can provide a solution to suit all budgets and criteria. As a truly independent retailer we are proud to say that we hand select, test and scrutinise all the products that we supply, ensuring a consistent standard of quality and reliability over our entire range of equipment. Drop in today to discuss your requirements or phone / email us to book a demonstration.

Tel: 01483 504801 | www.pjhifi.co.uk | Email: info@pjhifi.co.uk
3 Bridge Street | Guildford | Surrey GU1 4RY



SUGGESTED PARTNERS

The Technics combines flexibility with a mature sound. To make the most of it, try it with...

QNAP TS-231

You could connect the SU-G30 direct to a computer or store your music on a network device: this QNAP TS-231 is a cost-effective two-bay NAS.



QACOUSTICS CONCEPT 20 SPEAKERS

The warm, rich sound of the Technics would be well suited to good standmount speakers such as the QAcoustics Concept 20.



it comes to its features, but there's much commonality with the rest of the range. The amplification is the company's own digital design, here developing 50W into 8 ohms and twice that into 4 ohms, and the signal processing in the amp is similar. The power amplification uses in-house GaN-FET output devices to keep signal paths short, in that a single device offers both 'push' and 'pull', while the company's Load Adaptive Phase Calibration technology helps optimise the amplifier for the speakers with which it's being used, by playing and monitoring a sequence of test-tones during set-up. The USB and network inputs are isolated from the rest of the amplifier, to keep computer noise at bay, and incoming signals are also passed through via a two-step enhancement process, first attempting to bring compressed music up to CD quality and then upsampling everything to 176.4kHz or 192kHz at 32-bit resolution before it's passed through the main digital circuitry. Also present and correct is the Technics JENO Engine, which deals with 'Jitter Elimination and Noise-shaping Optimisation': it's all part of getting the cleanest possible signal to the digital amplification.

PERFORMANCE

You can operate the Technics with the remote handset supplied – the front-panel display is fairly clear and easy to read, especially close-up – but it's a much more satisfying experience to 'drive' this network amplifier using the free Technics Music app on a phone or tablet. It makes accessing and playing content much more intuitive and involves a lot less clicking to find and make settings. On a practical level, it's worth noting that the amplifier offers not only bass and treble tone controls but also a third adjustment for the midband. Accessed via the menu system, these are subtle in their operation, making small adjustments to the overall sound simple, and can be bypassed completely using a 'Direct' function. It's also possible to turn off the 'Re-Master' system, which helps inject some extra life into compressed music formats: if you play a lot of music in MP3 or AAC, for example – such as internet radio streams – it's well worth leaving this switched on.

Also worth noting is that the speaker optimisation works rather well. Once set up

you can turn it on and off at will; and while going from off to on isn't one of those night-and-day experiences, turning it off after a period of listening sees a noticeable softening of sound staging and just a little less focus. So this unusual feature is definitely worth having, even if its effect will vary from speaker to speaker.

The only other operational point worth making is that, while Wi-Fi capability is reasonable here, for optimal stability – especially if you're even considering using high-resolution music formats over DLNA streaming – I'd stick to a wired connection to your home network. I encountered a few buffering stutters when using wireless but with wired networking things were rock-solid.

Solid also describes the sound of the SU-G30. The balance here is warm and rich, with a generous smoothness that serves both large ensemble recordings and smaller-scale works rather well. It's not so lush as to be cloying or slow but rather balances weight with openness, delivering a view of the music that's easy on the ear but also very satisfying – and, after all, you can always inject a little more sparkle if required using the tone controls.

What's beyond doubt is the substance of the sound the Technics delivers, and the fact that, despite its relatively modest 'on paper' output, it has plenty of power for the dynamics of music, breezing through Natalie Dessay's 'Pictures of America' but also shining with Vincenzo Maltempo's measured performances of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, the piano having both lifelike weight and fine definition, with a real sense of the recorded acoustic around it. Similarly, the fluidity and beauty of Sirius Viols' recent release of Christopher Simpson's *The Four Seasons* sounds fresh and well-balanced via this amplifier: it's not quite the most detailed sound around and is bettered by more explicit players and amplification, but the sheer 'listenability' of the Technics is hard not to like.

With careful system matching and cobbling together of components it would be possible to equal what the SU-G30 can do for the same kind of money; however, the combination of convenience, flexibility and sheer usability on offer here makes this a rather attractive buy. **G**

Or you could try...

The hi-fi market is full of options for those wanting to integrate computer-stored music into an existing hi-fi system. While few solutions are as compact and comprehensive as the Technics, it seems every manufacturer has its own take on the subject.

Rotel RA-1592

If you're happy to use your computer as the control and source component for all your music, you could simply connect it via USB to an amplifier such as the powerful Rotel RA-1592 and enjoy your music all the way up to DSD quality. It lacks the streaming ability of the Technics – it has a network port but only for control purposes – but the Rotel comfortably undercuts the SU-G30 at around £1900. More details at rotel.com.



Denon PMA-1600NE

At £1300 or so the new Denon PMA-1600NE also offers USB input for formats up to DSD256/11.2MHz, as well as a more comprehensive range of analogue inputs than the Technics and outputs for two sets of speakers. Or you could keep it very simple with the same brand's sleek little DRA-100 network receiver at just £699: no computer input but instead there's network streaming at up to DSD128/5.6MHz and the ability to play hi-res music straight from USB storage. Details on both of these at denon.co.uk.



Musical Fidelity M6 Encore 225

If, however, you want to go even further than the Technics when it comes to computer music integration, look no further than the Musical Fidelity M6 Encore 225, which has both computer audio USB input and network streaming, plus access to online services and onboard CD ripping and storage, to make it an ideal stand-alone or networked choice. It's around £1000 more than the Technics but has more power and is a complete 'just add speakers' solution. More details at musicalfidelity.com.



● REVIEW MARANTZ SA-10

Marantz seeks the best of both worlds

An unashamedly high-end digital front-end to make the most of both discs and computer-stored media – using some very novel digital technology

To listen to some enthusiasts, you might think there's another hi-fi format war under way. Physical media are being challenged by downloads and computer-stored and streamed music as never before, and to some the whole idea of buying music on disc has become positively antediluvian. CDs and SACDs are what we put up with before the flood of files grew in strength.

For the music enthusiast, that creates the problem of backing one side or the other, or trying to accommodate both ways of listening in one system. For a company such as Marantz, which was in at the start of CD as it was then a part of format-inventor Philips, it is also a problem but one the company has attempted to answer in the past with both top-quality CD players and a range of network players.

In the new SA-10 it has brought all that thinking together. This reference player, selling for £5999, has been launched alongside the PM-10 amplifier as what the company calls its New Reference series. The amplifier is resolutely all-analogue, combining a pre-amplifier and bridged power amplifiers 'under one roof' and leaving all the digital work to the SA-10.

And a lot of digital work there is. Using a new custom-made transport mechanism, this machine can play not only CDs and SACDs but also high-resolution audio files burnt to CD-ROM or DVD-ROM media, all the way up to formats way beyond CD and SACD resolutions. But it also handles digital inputs from other hi-fi devices using both optical and coaxial digital inputs, can connect to a portable music player or USB storage device to play music, and has a USB-Type B input to which a computer can be connected, at which point the SA-10 is compatible with files at up to 384kHz/32 bit and DSD11.2 (or so-called 'quad-DSD').

As if all that weren't enough, the way the Marantz handles digital audio is totally different, too. This is a digital player/converter without any sign of a conventional digital-to-analogue converter in its signal chain. Instead, drawing on expertise within the design team going all the way back to early Philips 'Bitstream' technology, the SA-10 uses proprietary Marantz Musical Mastering technology



MARANTZ SA-10

Type SACD/CD player and digital converter

Price £5999

Disc formats played CD, SACD, CD-R/RW, DVD+/-R/RW

File formats PCM up to 384kHz/32 bit, DSD to 11.2MHz

Inputs Optical/coaxial digital, USB Type A and B

Outputs Optical/coaxial digital, analogue stereo on RCA phono and balanced XLRs, headphones

Other connections Marantz remote control in/out

Accessories supplied Remote handset

Finishes Black, gold

Dimensions (WxHxD) 44 x12.7x41.9cm

marantz.co.uk

to upsample all incoming digital data to DSD11.2 – at up to 12.288MHz depending on the original format – single-bit audio, using a two-clock system to ensure direct upsampling without sample rate conversion, and 32-bit processing to ensure accuracy. That done, in what the company calls its MMM-Stream section the signal is passed to the output stage which, in essence, is nothing more than a low-pass filter, designed to deliver the music to the analogue outputs while removing ultrasonic spurs.

The presence of the voice standing free in the sound stage is wonderful, adding to the listening experience

Marantz Brand Ambassador Ken Ishiwata, who worked closely with his colleague Rainer Finck on the design of the SA-10, explains that no conventional DAC is needed because the ultra-high-sampling rate, single-bit DSD11.2 signal is already analogue, in that it directly mirrors the audio content, so this filter is all that's needed in the MMM-Conversion stage.

PERFORMANCE

It's an intriguing approach to the design of such a player/converter, and one on which the Marantz team has been working for some time. Fortunately the results of this radical approach are readily apparent when one listens to the SA-10, whether with commercial discs or 'home-burnt' media, or connected to a computer acting as the player. The presentation here is typical of the company's high-end products of the past, with warmth underpinning the openness in the midband and sparkle in the treble; a superbly scaled sound stage within which is a remarkable focus on solo performers and ensembles alike; and, above all, an almost uncanny sense of communication with both the performance and the recording.

For example, playing the Doric Quartet's latest disc of Schubert in 96kHz/24 bit, the Marantz revels in the wide-open sound, dramatic dynamics and sheer attack of the performance. The instrumental textures are thrilling, as is the way the music is powered from the speakers with its tight rhythms and passion intact. It's all a bit breathtaking but wonderfully involving. Similarly with Mauro Peter's set of Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, also in 96kHz/24 bit, the warmth of the sound is infectious, as is the rich tone of the voice and the way it's balanced with the accompanying piano; but above all the presence of the voice standing free in the sound stage is really rather wonderful, adding immensely to the listening experience.

The Marantz plays both CDs and SACDs superbly well, the technology here seemingly levelling the playing field to some extent between the two formats by making Red Book discs shine but still showing the benefits of more data. And that's certainly the case with files up to the player's DSD256/11.2MHz limit, not to mention hi-res DXD content – such music is still relatively scarce but the luminous sound this player can deliver with a DXD original or even a DSD5.6 file is really very addictive.

With the SA-10, Marantz has set out to eclipse the acclaimed SA-7 player. That has been more than achieved, while at the same time adding whole new layers of functionality and convenience. The CD is in safe hands here – but this new reference player has so much more to give. **G**

**THE GLOBAL MEETING FOR ALL
ART MUSIC INNOVATORS**

Expo
Networking
Conference
Showcase Festival
Innovation Award
Online Community

Classical NEXT

SAVE THE DATE
17–20 May
2017

DE DOELEN
ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

GUIDE RATE UNTIL
3 Mar 2017

Register online at
www.classicalnext.com

● ESSAY

'It could be that streaming music is coming of age...'

The case for online music services is becoming more persuasive

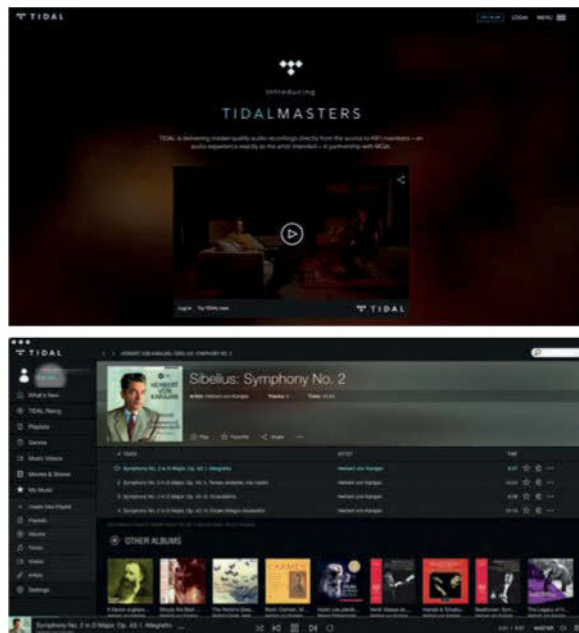
Two things since I wrote last month's Essay on voice-controlled devices have shown me how radically the music landscape is changing. A friend contacted me raving about the Amazon Echo device a relative had bought, and Tidal rolled out the first tranche of music at 'Masters' quality using MQA technology.

'It's amazing: I just asked her to play a song I was thinking about, and there it was,' came the only slightly breathlessly excited 'I must have one' message I received from my friend. Seems she'd been visiting a relative and they were talking about a song, and the relative just said 'Ask Alexa.'

She had no idea where the music came from or how – chances are it was sourced from the Amazon Music catalogue, as I'm not sure they've gone to the stage of Spotify integration or the like – nor did she really care: for the price of the Echo device, which is around £150, she had all the music she could ever want on tap for free, which seemed like a fairly tempting prospect. And, provided the catalogue covers the genres in which she's interested, it's a service one might find relatively hard to argue with, even if she never moves on to controlling her heating, lighting and so on with the Amazon device.

At the other end of the spectrum, I was delighted to see the arrival of a range of MQA-encoded Masters recordings, mainly from the Warner Bros catalogue, on the Tidal service. These 'studio quality' titles come complete with the ability to play them using no extra hardware via the company's desktop app on a home computer, which then connects to the hi-fi system using a USB connection, either via a dedicated input on some amplifier and receivers or using a suitable USB DAC.

All of a sudden, this move seems to justify the hoo-hah that's been going on about Tidal for what seems like a rather long time and clarifies what the system is all about. After all, the idea of smaller file sizes, created via MQA's 'audio origami', seems to be of little relevance when computer storage is so inexpensive: most affordable laptops now come with 500GB or 1TB of hard-disk space as standard



Tidal Masters is gradually breaking into the classical world

and adding extra storage, either as plug-in USB drives or network-attached devices, has never been cheaper.

No, where MQA makes sense is in applications such as Tidal, in which music is streamed in real time from online servers and played as it's received. In that context, keeping file-sizes small – and thus data transfer rates down – makes good sense. After all, not everyone has the three-figure Mbps broadband rates some of us enjoy.

For the price of the Echo device, you can have all the music you could ever want on tap for free

And the Tidal implementation makes listening to these Masters recordings very simple, thanks to built-in MQA decoding. You can decide to bypass this if you have an MQA-compatible DAC, such as the little Meridian Explorer2 I was using to test out the new Tidal offering, in which case the DAC will do the MQA decode as well as the digital-to-analogue conversion. However, for many users the ability to add this hi-res music to their 'virtual collection' without adding extra hardware is likely to appeal: having tried both hardware and software decoding using the Explorer2 between

my computer and my hi-fi, I'd say leaving the DAC to do the heavy lifting brings a useful extra clarity and weight; but the software solution gets pretty close, and is noticeably crisper and more detailed than listening to the CD-quality version.

Of course, there is a cost involved. Even without the need for a 'special' DAC, in order to access the Masters content you'll need a Tidal Hi-Fi subscription at £19.99 a month. At the moment most of the content on offer is from the 'pop, rock, etc' end of the market, with a relatively small number of classical titles on offer – although you can find the likes of Jonas Nordberg, the Kronos Quartet and a fair smattering of the Karajan catalogue. But as an example of what can be done when the will is there, the initial offering is fairly impressive.

True, Tidal isn't alone, and Qobuz, available as part of its Hi-Fi service, offers unlimited streaming of its content in CD quality for the same price as Tidal Hi-Fi. But you have to sign up for the Qobuz Sublime service, at £220 a year, to also get hi-res streaming – and then only of music you have already bought, though admittedly Sublime also gives you 30-60 per cent off the cost of such downloads. If you buy a lot of hi-res music and want to be able to stream it in rooms other than the location of your main music computer/system, or even when travelling, the pricing can still make sense.

Tidal is promising a growing library of music available in Masters quality using MQA, so it remains to be seen how that will develop in terms of the classical offering, given that the ownership of the operation is more slanted towards 'mass-market' musical styles. For my friend keen on summoning up random tunes from the ether for free, that won't matter too much, and neither would I go quite as far as the head of one of the retail chains who told me the other week 'From now all that downloading is over – I mean, why would you?' However, what I do take from all this is that it's good to see that, in the headlong rush to streaming music, decent sound quality still seems to be firmly on the radar. **G**

Oranges & Lemons

of Battersea

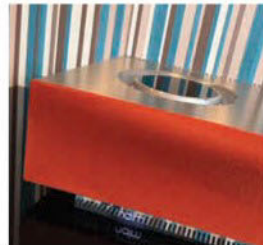
Home Cinema Hi-Fi & Streaming Multi-Room

020 7924 2040

www.oandlhifi.co.uk 61-63 Webbs Road London SW11 6RX



MusicMatters
Specialists in sound & vision



Visit our website or call us for advice...
musicmatters.co.uk

Birmingham	0121 429 2811
Solihull	0121 742 0254
Leamington Spa	01926 888 644
London	020 8420 1925
Stratford	01789 414 533



Est. 1970
IAN EDWARDS
OF HARROGATE Est. 1970

Tel: **01423 500442**

for sales/enquiries or FREE brochure call - 01423 500442
www.iansbespokefurniture.co.uk



Handmade Bespoke Furniture
for CD's • LP's • DVD's & Books

The Old Chapel, 282 Skipton Road,
Harrogate, Yorkshire HG1 3HE

020 7226 5500
www.grahams.co.uk



"One of the five best hi-fi
shops in the world"
ARENA Magazine

Grahams Hi-Fi
Canonbury Yard
190a New North Road
London N1 7BS

Ian Harrison HI FI Sale!
UP TO 40% OFF!

SPECIALIST SUPPLIER OF TURNTABLES, TONEARMS,
CARTRIDGES, PHONO STAGES, RECORD CLEANING
MACHINES, HEADPHONES & CABLES

TEL: 01283 702875 (UK) 9AM - 9PM
EMAIL: IAN.HARRISON@MERCIAN.MYZEN.CO.UK

Is this your problem?



Here's your
answer

It's a common problem. The usable range on the volume control is all down at the bottom end and fine control at low listening levels is either difficult or impossible. The noise floor may be audible, too. There is a simple and effective solution- the Rothwell In-Line Attenuators. They can be used with pre/power or integrated amps to cure the problems of excess gain and bring sonic benefits with even the most expensive equipment.

£39/pair - post free
01204 366133 www.rothwellaudioproducts.co.uk



"this accessory
is heartily
recommended"
Gramophone

**To
ADVERTISE
IN THIS
SECTION
PLEASE
CALL
020
7501
6368**

Uk Classical Archives
celebrating 40 years in the gramophone industry

WE BUY
LP & CD collections
Orchestral - Opera - Jazz & Blues
Hi-Fi always required
Turntables - Speakers - Amplifiers

9am - 9pm 7 days a week

01803 606162

we cover UK Ireland & Europe
collection service available

or email your lists to

ukclassicalarchives@gmail.com

Saffron Hall



2016-17 Season Spring & Summer Highlights

Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui
mJlonga
Penguin Cafe
The Sixteen
Alfredo Rodriguez Trio

Willard White & the
Brodsky Quartet
Gabrieli
András Schiff
Britten Sinfonia

Book now www.saffronhall.com | 0845 548 7650
Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre

IMAGES CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: MAHAN ESHAGHI © BERNHARD MUELLER, MLOJONGA © TRISTRAM KENTON, ALFREDO RODRIGUEZ © ANNA WEBBER, THE SIXTEEN © MICHAEL JARVIS, PENGUIN CAFE © PHILIP

Czech Music Direct



CD of the Month

History, Mystery
and Soundings
Symphonies by
Barbara Harbach
played by the
London Philharmonic
MSR Classics MS 1519

www.czecheverything.co.uk
cmd@czecheverything.co.uk
Tel: +44 020 8346 0088



Potton Hall Recording Studio

- Set in Suffolk Countryside 5 miles from Southwold
- First class acoustics and facilities
- Steinway Model 'D' Grand Piano available
- A complete CD package available
- Reasonable rates
- Accommodation/Leisure Spa available on site
- Full Brochure available by request



www.pottonhallltd.co.uk | 01728 648265

**0207
689
7533**



**LPs + CDs
BOUGHT**

ANYWHERE IN THE UK
FAIR PRICES PAID

info@watsonrecords.co.uk

WATSON
RECORDS

revolutions

records and cds

We buy classical LPs
From 1950s - 1970s

Examples - we will pay up to:

£2500 for Leonid Kogan on Columbia SAX

£1500 for Johanna Martzy on Columbia 33CX

£4000 for Andre Levy on Lumen

Top prices paid for EMI ASD, Columbia SAX, Decca SXL.



*Run by musicians
for music lovers*

We will travel to anywhere in the UK to view sizeable collections or can buy by post from your lists.

Quality hi-fi equipment purchased -

EMT - GARRARD - TANNOY - THORENS Etc.

CD Collections also purchased

For prompt attention, contact:

Leslie Laine, BA (hons)

or Dr Matthew Pollard

Revolutions, 1st Floor 67 Victoria Road,
Worthing, West Sussex BN11 1UN

email: info@revolutions33.co.uk

Tel: 01903 209553

www.revolutions33.co.uk

RECORDS FOR SALE

Oriel Opera Archives

'Preserving Our Opera Heritage'

More than 400 British Opera performances from 50 years ago on CD - mostly in English. Now carefully restored.

Great Performances! Great Singing! Great Sound!

Catalogue and free sample CD available from:
Oriel Music Trust, 79 Ffordd Glyder, Port Dinorwic,
Gwynedd LL56 4QX

All profits go to the Musicians Benevolent Fund

opera@orielmusic.org 01248 670 797



Yarborough House
Bookshop and Coffee House

4,000 CDs Rapidly Changing Stock.
Much unusual repertoire. All guaranteed.
Large secondhand general book stock.

We buy interesting LPs, CDs, DVDs and quality books,
particularly music, philosophy and literature.
Will collect or pay postage.
No mail order.

The Square, Bishops Castle, Shropshire, SY9 5BN
Open 5 days 10am - 5pm / Closed Mon & Wed

www.yarboroughhouse.com
01588 638318



SCHOPPER AG
(Switzerland)

The best partner for your Thorens TD 124 !
Restorations & Parts

www.thorens-td124.ch

BUY • SELL • TRADE

vinyl • CDs • DVDs • box sets

nothing legal refused! (ID required)

CLASSICAL MUSIC EXCHANGE

38 Notting Hill Gate, W11, open 7 days 10am - 8pm

www.mgeshops.com

☎ 020 7792 5847

SEVENOAKS

Classical Compact Discs and DVDs

The Compact Disc Shop

57 London Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1AU.
01732 740 889 martin@bluesandjazz.co.uk

- A wide range of new releases and back catalogue in stock.
- All Labels - All distributors - Both large and small.
- Full title and artist identification service.

MAIL ORDER

Is a major part of our business. We offer a prompt and efficient delivery usually within 2/3 days.

GIVE US A RING AND TRY OUR SERVICE

- We also stock Jazz, Blues, World music and talking books etc.

Beecham CDs. All the Beecham recordings on CD, both commercial and public performances. Offers to Payling, buyer collects, Loughborough, UK.
Call 01509 844299.

Classical and jazz LPs/CDs wanted.
Can collect or deal by post.

www.esmetronrecords.com
esmetronrecords@btinternet.com

TO ADVERTISE IN THIS SECTION
PLEASE CALL 020 7501 6368

NOTES & LETTERS

Enjoying modern music • Listening habits today • The genius of Arturo Toscanini

Write to us at Gramophone, Mark Allen Group, St Jude's Church, Dulwich Road, London SE24 0PB or gramophone@markallengroup.com

Let's hear it for new music...

Of course Thomas Rookes has no obligation to listen to music he does not care for (Letters, February, page 122), but there is no need to accuse composers or teachers of a lack of integrity because he does not like their work. For a piece by Schoenberg which is utterly beautiful, I suggest he tries *Verklärte Nacht*. For something more challenging but still enjoyable, I suggest his Five Orchestral Pieces. These and other works by Schoenberg and his contemporaries and successors appear more frequently in concert programmes than he might realise because performers find them rewarding and listeners find them beautiful, intriguing or challenging. Of course these particular works are over a century old. Of new works at last year's Proms – I did not hear them all – I would nominate Anthony Payne's *Of Land, Sea and Sky* as a work to hear again.

Stephen Barber
Carterton, Oxon.

...but rehearsing is a problem

Of the problems that impinge on understanding modern music today, the biggest is rehearsal time. Up until the end of the Second World War, there was lots of rehearsal time – it was possible to devote four rehearsals to a piece like Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* which Koussevitzky promoted assiduously in the work's first couple of months. But today, you are lucky to get one full rehearsal. It is all but impossible for the conductor and, especially the orchestra, to present in such short time a preparation of the notes of a new piece as written. And getting the notes is just not sufficient for getting to the music that lies within the notes. The orchestra, especially, has not had enough time to decide whether they still absolutely hate it or whether they feel the music that's hidden underneath.

The acquaintance with the music gained in rehearsal time matters. Nowadays no one is willing to pay for more than the minimum of rehearsal time for each concert. So the communicativeness of the performance suffers. It is a very brave conductor who is willing to follow his or her instincts with a new composition and do what is necessary to give a full representation of the music. So, they

Letter of the Month

Rediscovering Zukerman's musicianship

When I discovered classical music in my early teens in the late 1980s, Pinchas Zukerman was featured on a lot of the albums I bought, but I was never very much impressed. I guess I just thought that, along with Perlman, 'That's what a violinist sounds like.'

Today I admire a lot of violinists; among the more recent ones I particularly love are Julia Fischer and Lisa Batiashvili. But Rob Cowan's review of the Zukerman box [Replay, February, page 97] made me go back to him again and I didn't just rediscover this wonderful musician – I *discovered* him.

I have now made a Spotify list devoted to him that I listen to almost daily and I am amazed by his stylish and elegant playing. He makes the Haydn Violin Concerto in C come alive like no other I have heard. And through the



Pinchas Zukerman: makes Haydn 'come alive'

duo album he did with Perlman I have discovered music I never even knew existed. For this I am truly thankful.

Daniel Rehn
Lilla Essingen, Sweden

prestoclassical.co.uk is a website that speaks your language, 'underpinned by an evident love of music and the world of recordings' (Gramophone). No other site selling classical CDs and DVDs is arranged in such a logical and accessible format, where you can easily find lists of composers' works, compare different options, view recommendations and read reviews. We believe you will find it one of the most user-friendly classical music sites on the internet. The Letter of the Month receives £50 of Presto Classical gift vouchers. Gramophone reserves the right to edit letters for publication

PRESTO
CLASSICAL

usually don't. No wonder new music is so difficult these days. It is usually obligatory rather than truly felt.

Ben Cutler, via email

Spotify as a springboard

I am a great admirer of Rory Cellan-Jones with his ability to make technology matters clear to Luddites such as me, but I must take issue with him over his views on the use of Spotify, namely that, when you first get it, you aim to sample different sorts of music but that, inevitably, you end up listening to things you already know ('My Music', March page 130).

I do use Spotify to play familiar things but, even though I'm a good deal older than Rory, I also use it in conjunction with Gramophone, BBC Radio 3 and other radio stations to constantly explore new music and expand my horizons. Then, when I find things I like, I expand my CD collection.

Rev Brian Gardner, via email

Winter Legends

A few mornings ago, I heard Bax's *Winter Legends* on the radio. I live in America, north central Montana, where the winters are legendary. The Bax didn't capture the capricious chill of our winters, but the music was magnificent – not so much wintry as evocative of Shelley's 'When winter comes, can spring be far behind'. It's a shame that Jeremy Nicholas couldn't find room for it in his 'Specialist's Guide to Winter music' (January, page 104).

Paavo Hall
Great Falls, MT, USA

(Almost) essential Toscanini

I suppose that when a great artist leaves a substantial recorded legacy, difficult choices have to be made over which recordings should be included in a tribute collection to celebrate 150 years since his birth. The recently issued 'Essential Recordings' box of discs celebrating Arturo Toscanini from RCA/Sony Classical certainly contains some

marvellous things – the Verdi operas, the Wagner excerpts, Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, Brahms's Second and so on – and, like your reviewer Richard Osborne (February, page 82), I find myself 'excited, delighted or instructed by around 80 per cent of the choices here'.

I share Mr Osborne's astonishment that Respighi's vulgar *Roman Festivals* should have been preferred over *The Pines of Rome*, especially as RCA has a great and exciting recording of this piece from Carnegie Hall, March 1953. And where is one of the maestro's incomparable performances of Verdi's Overture from *The Force of Destiny*? The November 1952 performance is particularly exciting, and you can hear Toscanini whisper 'più calmo' to his players just before one of the more lyrical passages. Both these recordings were in Vol X of 'Toscanini, the Immortal' series.

I am grateful, though, to RCA/Sony Classical for the latest box, and appreciate the work of the engineers to improve the sound quality of these marvellous discs.
Martin Hall
Southampton, Hants

Murakami on music

I'd like to pass on something I read in *Absolutely on Music*, the series of conversations between novelist Haruki Murakami and conductor Seiji Ozawa [Books, November 2016, page 100]. The part that particularly jumped out at me was the following statement by Murakami: 'No one ever taught me how to write. I've never made a study of writing techniques. So how did I learn to write? By listening to music...no one is going to read what you write unless it's got rhythm, it has to have an inner rhythmic feel that propels the reader forward.' The novelist continues: 'You can't write well if you don't have an ear for music'.

I suspect Murakami is right. And I'm sure that what he says applies equally to non-fiction. Most of us have heard the saying that 'writing about music is like dancing about architecture'. If *Gramophone* has been around longer than most people reading these words, it is, in part, because it has consistently disproved this cliché. That content is important goes without saying, but writing has to pulse with an inner music, or it lies dead on the page. Fortunately for many generations of *Gramophone* readership, your contributors have always listened to a lot of music!

David English
Somerville, MA, USA

OBITUARIES

Four fine musicians remembered – two singers, two conductors

NICOLAI GEDDA

Tenor

Born July 11, 1925

Died January 8, 2017



The Swedish tenor Nicolai Gedda has died at his home in Switzerland at the age of 91. Versatile in range and style, he was admired equally on the operatic stage and the recital platform, in almost every kind of repertoire, and was a prolific recording artist. In short, he was the model of a modern singer.

In summing up his career it is difficult to know what to put first. In a period when native French tenors were thin on the ground, he was the number one international choice as Werther or as Don José in *Carmen*. For Russian operas, he was hardly less useful, as he spoke the language fluently, and was vocally ideal for Lensky in *Eugene Onegin*. Turn to Italian opera and his middleweight tenor had the range to be both a touching Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore* and a convincing Gustavo in *Un ballo in maschera*, a role which he played strikingly with the theatrical persona of Sweden's historical Gustav III.

His facility in languages played a big part in his success. Born in Stockholm in 1925, he was brought up by a Swedish aunt and her husband, a Russian-born singer. When the family moved to Leipzig so that his stepfather could take up a job as a choirmaster, he became fluent in German, and his French, Italian and English were soon no less expert. It is clear from his performances that he was more than just accurate in pronunciation. The rhythm, the phrasing, the shades of meaning are idiomatic in each of the languages he sang.

Gedda made his operatic debut with the Swedish National Opera, coming to the notice of Walter Legge, EMI's fabled record producer, early on in Adam's *Le postillon de Lonjumeau*, top Ds and all. In a sign of the versatility to come, he made his La Scala debut with Don Ottavio in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, his Covent Garden debut as the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, and his Metropolitan Opera debut as Gounod's Faust. His first recording was as Grigory in EMI's 1952 *Boris Godunov* with Boris Christoff,

followed later the same year by Bach's B minor Mass, conducted by Karajan.

What a career this tenor for all seasons had. Looking back over his 374 performances at the Met, it is fascinating to see, alongside the many appearances in *Faust* and *Eugene Onegin*, less immediately obvious assignments such as *La sonnambula*, *The Queen of Spades*, *The Bartered Bride* and *I vespri Siciliani*, not to mention the premiere of Barber's *Vanessa* and Menotti's *The Last Savage*. At the age of 71 he was still singing at Covent Garden, playing the Patriarch of Assyria in Pfitzner's *Palestrina*, and his quirky cameo quite stole the show. Gedda brought such life to everything he sang, always probing words and music in depth to create a performance that was inimitably his own.

A host of recordings will perpetuate his art. There are the three operas with Callas, *Il turco in Italia*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Carmen*; another *Carmen* (Beecham the conductor), *Faust* and *Werther*, still one of the best, with De Los Angeles; Rostropovich's trailblazing recording of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*; *Die lustige Witwe* with Schwarzkopf together with many other operettas; Giulini's Verdi Requiem and a pair of English-language oratorios, *Elijah* with Baker and Fischer-Dieskau and *The Dream of Gerontius* conducted by Boult; and that is not to mention song recitals in every language and hue. Many of the classic recordings of the post-war era are on this list. And that, more often than not, is thanks to the artistry of Gedda himself. **Richard Fairman**

STANISŁAW SKROWACZEWSKI

Conductor and composer

Born October 3, 1923

Died February 21, 2017



Polish-born American conductor Stanisław Skrowaczewski, who has died aged 93, was noted particularly for his performances of Bruckner's symphonies though was also an admired composer in his own right. Born in Lwów (then in Poland), he studied in Kraków and later, with Nadia Boulanger, in Paris. His first conducting appointments were as Music Director of the Wrocław Philharmonic, then the

Katowice Philharmonic and the Kraków Philharmonic, and finally the Warsaw National Orchestra.

A win at the 1958 Santa Cecilia conducting competition, followed by an invitation from George Szell to conduct the Cleveland Orchestra, led to Skrowaczewski being appointed Music Director of the Minneapolis SO (now the Minnesota Orchestra), a post he held from 1960 until 1979, when he became the orchestra's Conductor Laureate (meaning that he held a role with the orchestra for 56 years). From 1983 to '92 he was Principal Conductor of the Hallé and, from 1995 to '97, he was Artistic Adviser to the Milwaukee SO. His last concerts, in October 2016, were with his beloved Minnesota Orchestra at which they performed Bruckner's Eighth Symphony. The previous October he became the oldest conductor to perform at London's Royal Festival Hall: Bruckner's Fifth Symphony with the LPO (the recording was subsequently released on the orchestra's own label, drawing the comment from *Gramophone's* Christian Hoskins that 'the applause also reflects a performance of exceptional insight and concentration').

Throughout his life, Skrowaczewski was a committed recording artist, in his earlier years as a fine accompanist; records included the Chopin piano concertos with both Alexis Weissenberg and Ewa Kupiec, Mozart piano concertos with Walter Klien, the Penderecki Violin Concerto with Isaac Stern, and Beethoven and Brahms piano concertos with Gina Bachauer. His most critically acclaimed recordings came relatively late in his life and included cycles of the complete symphonies, with the Saarbrücken RSO for Oehms Classics, of Bruckner, Beethoven, Brahms ('Where others make Brahms sound portly, Skrowaczewski works the fat back into gleaming muscle', Rob Cowan wrote vividly) and Schumann.

As a composer, Skrowaczewski wrote for his ensembles including, in 1981, a Clarinet Concerto for the Minnesota's Principal Joe Longo. There are recordings of his Concerto for Orchestra, his Concerto for English Horn and Orchestra, *Concerto Nicolò*, *Music at Night*, *Fantasia 'Il piffero della notte'* and a number of his chamber compositions.

KURT MOLL

Bass

Born April 11, 1938

Died March 5, 2017



Kurt Moll, who sang Baron Ochs on seven recordings of *Der Rosenkavalier* and Sarastro on six of *Die Zauberflöte*, has died aged 78.

Born near Cologne, where he studied, Moll joined the city's opera at the age of 20, later singing with companies in Mainz, Wuppertal and Hamburg. He made his Bayreuth debut as the Nightwatchman in *Die Meistersinger* in 1968, returning in following seasons as Fafner, Mark and Pogner. He made his US debut in San Francisco in 1974 as Gurnemanz and first appeared at the Met in 1977 as the Landgrave in *Tannhäuser* (he would also sing Rocco in *Fidelio* and Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* with the company). He retired from the stage in 2006.

Moll recorded extensively in opera, choral works and song. His Baron Ochs can be heard on sets conducted by Karajan, Carlos Kleiber and Andrew Davis among others, as can his Sarastro for Colin Davis, Solti and Sawallisch, and his King Mark (*Tristan und Isolde*) for Mehta and Carlos Kleiber. Other opera recordings include *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Die Meistersinger* and *Parsifal* (Karajan), *Der Freischütz* (Harnoncourt), *Tannhäuser* (Haitink), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Harnoncourt), *Rigoletto* (Giulini), *Don Giovanni* and *Otello* (Solti).

He appears in recordings of Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* conducted by Dorati, Bernstein and Levine, and recorded Schubert's *Winterreise* with Cord Garben.

ALBERTO ZEDDA

Musicologist and conductor

Born January 2, 1928

Died March 6, 2017



A major figure in the revival of rare Italian operas, Rossini's in particular, Alberto Zedda has died aged 89. As a conductor, he studied with

Antonino Votto and Carlo Maria Giulini and made his debut in Milan in 1956, winning the RAI International Conductors Competition the following year. With Philip Gossett he worked on the complete critical edition of Rossini's operas and served on the committee of the Rossini Foundation in Pesaro.

Zedda's substantial discography – many for Naxos – includes operas by Rossini, Bellini, Spontini, Cimarosa and Monteverdi.

NEXT MONTH MAY 2017



Defining Monteverdi's music, 450 years on

With 2017 celebrating the 450th anniversary of his birth, Monteverdi is the subject of David Vickers's comprehensive cover feature which explores how his music is interpreted in the 21st century

Isabelle Faust on Chausson and Franck

Charlotte Gardner speaks to the German violinist about her new sonatas disc for Harmonia Mundi

Serenading Brahms

Andrew Farach-Colton surveys the available recordings of Brahms's Serenade No 1, a work which, despite its bucolic charm, is rich with emotional complexity

GRAMOPHONE
ON SALE APRIL 26
DON'T MISS IT!

1997 - 2017 Jazzwise

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

YOUR SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY OFFER

20% OFF + A FREE T-SHIRT

With this subscription offer you'll receive:

- ✓ 11 print issues
- ✓ 11 new digital issues
- ✓ Unlimited access to over 225 classic editions in the searchable digital archive
- ✓ A limited edition *Jazzwise* t-shirt
- ✓ Guarantee your copy of our special bumper 20th anniversary April 2017 edition

All this from only £4.20 per month
when using code 20YEARS

“Informative, inclusive,
iconic, inspirational,
international, improvising,
illuminating *Jazzwise*!”
Courtney Pine



Visit www.magsubscriptions.com/jazzwise20

or call 0800 137 201 (UK) | Overseas + 44 (0)1722 716997

One-year premium subscription £63 (Direct Debit, UK only) £67 (credit card). Promotional code 20YEARS must be used to receive the discounted price offered. Price includes P&P for orders within the UK. International orders will be charged shipping costs. T-shirt will be sent 30 days after payment is received, by recorded/signed for delivery. One t-shirt per subscription order. No returns. Only available while stocks last. This offer is only available to new subscribers.

NEW RELEASES INDEX

The latest releases on CD, SACD, DVD, Blu-ray and download

Key: ⑆ Full price £10 and over ④ Medium price £7.76 – £9.99 ⑥ Budget price £6.25 – £7.75 ⑧ Super-budget price up to £6.24 ③ Reissue ① Historic ② SACD ② DVD ② Blu-ray ① LP ② Download only

CD & SACD

ACCENT

Beethoven. Possinger Vn Concs. *Steck/Arpa Festante/Halls*. ⑆ ACC24320

ACCENTUS

Bach, JS Goldberg Vars. *Xiao-Mai*. ⑆ ACC40372

ALPHA

Clarke. Purcell Son of England. *Poème Harmonique/Dumestre*. ⑆ ALPHA285

Various Cpsrs Grandes eaux musicales de Versailles. *Various artists*. ⑆ ALPHA969

Various Cpsrs Passaggio: eine Barocke Alpenüberquerung. *Colell/Kallweit*. ⑆ ALPHA540

ANALEKTA

Bach, JS Inventions and Sinf. *Nagano, KK*. ⑆ AN2 8771

APARTÉ

Various Cpsrs Catharsis – Op Arias. *Sabata/Armonia Atenea/Petrou*. ⑆ AP143

ARCANA

Purcell Ayres & Songs from Orpheus Britannicus. *Feldman, JJ North/Cunningham/Moroney*. ⑆ ② A430

AUDITE

Brahms Stg Sextets. *Mandelring Qt*. ⑆ AUDITE97 715
Franck. Szymanowski Wks for Vn & Pf. *Pietsch/Eisinger*. ⑆ AUDITE97 726

Handel Nine German Arias. Brockes-Passion – excs. *Siedlaczek/Lautten Compagny/Latschner*. ⑆ AUDITE97 729
Various Cpsrs Forgotten Avant-garde of Early Music. *Ens Arcimboldo/Hirsch*. ⑆ AUDITE97 730

BERLIN CLASSICS

Britten Sinf da Requiem Stravinsky Firebird. *Staatskapelle Dresden/Kempe*. ⑆ ③ 0300890BC; ⑆ ③ 0300892BC
Eisler Kalifornische Ballade. *Hahnel/May/Busch, E/Ebony Band*. ⑆ 0300933BC

Mozart Syms Nos 39 & 40. *Staatskapelle Dresden/Suiter*. ⑆ ③ 0300881BC; ⑆ ③ 0300882BC

Mussorgsky Pictures at an Exhibition. Night on the Bare Mountain. *Leipzig Gewandhaus Orch/Markevitch*. ⑆ ③ 0300891BC; ⑆ ③ 0300896BC

Ravel Orch Wks. *Berlin SO/Herbig*. ⑆ ③ 0300880BC; ⑆ ③ 0300886BC

Weber Cpte Wks for Cl. *Manz/SWR Stuttgart SO/Méndez*. ④ ② 0300835BC

Various Cpsrs Wks for Hn. *Damm/Staatskapelle Dresden/Leipzig Gewandhaus Orch*. ⑧ ③ ③ 0300930BC

BIS

Beethoven Pf Concs Nos 1 & 2. *Sudbin/Tapiola Sinfonietta/Vänskå*. ⑆ ② BIS2078

Mozart Serenades Nos 9 & 13. *Cologne Academy/Willens*. ⑆ ② BIS2244

Pettersson Sym No 14. *Norrköping SO/Lindberg, C*. ⑆ ② BIS2230

Various Cpsrs Nordsending – Wks for Stg Trio & Duo. *Trio Aristos*. ⑆ BIS2269

Various Cpsrs Pf Wks. *Zhang*. ⑆ ② BIS2238

BLUE HERON

Anonymous Missa sine nomine: Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks, Vol 5. *Blue Heron/Metcalf*. ⑆ BHCD1007

BRIDGE

Various Cpsrs Lounge Lizards – Wks for Pf Duo. *Quattro Mani*. ⑆ BRIDGE9486

Various Cpsrs Parisian Inspirations – Wks for Fl & Pf. *Jackson/Stroke*. ⑆ BRIDGE9482

BRILLIANT CLASSICS

Beethoven. Reger Serenades for Fl, Vn & Va. *Oliva/Parazzoli/Sanzó*. ③ 95420

Bononcini Stabat mater. *Alessandro Stradella Consort/Velardi*. ③ 95486

Caldara Missa Dolorosa. *Ens La Silva/Schaap*. ③ 95482

Farrenc Wind Sextet. Trios. *Opera Ens/Carlo*. ⑧ ② 95319

Merkel Org Wks. *Guandalino*. ③ 95287

Myaskovsky Vc Sons. *Magariello/Novarino*. ③ 95437

Various Cpsrs Anthology of Classical Gtr Wks. *Various artists*. ⑧ (40 CDs) 95480

Various Cpsrs Gtr Vibes. *Elias/Netherlands CO/Matangi Qt/Maier*. ③ 95484

BR-KLASSIK

Chabrier España Ravel Heure espagnole (pp2016). *Sols/Munich Rad Orch/Fisch*. ⑆ 900317

Various Cpsrs Op Arias (bp1959-65). *Wunderlich*. ⑆ ③ 900315

CAPRICCIO

Dvořák Spectre's Bride. *Sols incl Šaturová & Breslik/ORF Vienna RSO/Meister*. ⑆ C5315

Massenet Ballet Stes. *ASMF/Marriner*. ⑆ ③ C8016

Scarlatti, D Kybd Sons. *Koopman*. ⑆ ③ C8017

Schubert Schöne Müllerin. *Skovhus/Vladar*. ⑆ C5290

CARPE DIEM

Various Cpsrs Cembalo di Partenope: a Renaissance Hpd Tale. *Vicens*. ⑆ CD16312

CD ACCORD

Beethoven Vc Sons, Op 5. *Thiel/Drogosz*. ⑆ ACD225

Weinberg Stg Qt No 7. Pf Qtnt. *Silesian Qt/Sałaszyk*. ⑆ ACD239

Various Cpsrs Gems of Eastern Europe – Wks for Vn & Pf. *Tarcholik/Wilińska-Tarcholik*. ⑆ ACD229

CHANDOS

Bach, JS St John Passion (sung in English). *Sols/Crouch End Fest Chor/Bach Camerata/Temple*. ③ ② ② CHSA5183

Elgar Sym No 1. Introduction & Allegro. *Doric Qt/BBC SO/Gardner*. ⑆ ② CHSA5181

Fauré. Franck. Szymanowski Wks for Vn & Pf. *Little/Lane*. ⑆ CHAN10940

Sousa Celebration. *RSNO/Järvi, K*. ⑆ ② CHSA5182

CHANNEL CLASSICS

Beethoven Piano Trios, Opp 70 & 121. *Hamlet Pf Trio*. ⑆ CCS39117

Dvořák. Schubert Stg Qts. *Dragon Qt*. ⑆ CCS39417

Mahler Sym No 3. *Sols/Budapest Fest Orch/ Fischer, I*. ④ ② ② CCSSA38817

CHRISTOPHORUS

Anonymous. Manna. Merola Sacred Salterio – Lamentations of the Holy Week. *Feuersinger/Dolce Conforto/Fleischanderl*. ⑆ CHR77408

Capricornus Lieder von dem Leyden und Tode Jesu. *Chapelle Rhénane/Haller*. ⑆ CHR77407

CLAUDIO

Beethoven Pf Sons, Vol 7. *Costa*. ⑆ CB5577-2

CORO

Haydn Sieben letzten Worte. *Callino Qt*. ⑆ COR16152

CPO

Brahms Cpte Duets & Qts. *Sols incl Banse/Rieger/Deutsch*. ④ ③ CPO777 537-2

Draeseke Chbr Wks. *Berlin Sols' Ens*. ⑆ CPO555 107-2

Goldmark, R. Woyrsch Pf Trios. *Hyperion Trio*. ⑆ CPO555 122-2

Papandopulo Pf Conc No 3. Vn Conc. *Triendl/Zhu/Rijeka Op SO/Matvejeff*. ⑆ CPO555 100-2

Praetorius Erhalt uns Herr bey deinem Wort: Lutheran Choral Concerts. *Weser-Renaissance/Cordes*. ⑆ CPO555 064-2

Various Cpsrs Davon ich singen und sagen will: Martin Luther und die Musik. *Sols/Johann Rosenmüller Ens/Stötzel*. ④ CPO555 098-2

Various Cpsrs Plays & Ops for the Radio. *Jens Winkelmann Orch/Theis*. ⑆ ② CPO777 839-2

CYPRES

Various Cpsrs Oreille de Mélanie: In Memory of Mélanie Defize. *Various artists*. ⑆ CYP9619

DACAPO

Olsen Songs. *Bruun Hyldig Duo*. ⑆ 8 226078

DELOS

Dvarionas. Pärt. Vasks Baltic & Beyond – Wks for Vn & Pf. *Koornhof/Hecht*. ⑆ DE3529

Poldowski Art Songs. *Zuluaga/Mok/Zwahlen/Alexander Qt*. ⑆ DE3538

DELPHIAN

Various Cpsrs Edge of Time: Palaeolithic Bone Fls from France & Germany. *Potengowski/Wagner, GW*. ⑆ DCD34185

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON

Various Cpsrs 175th Anniversary Edn. *VPO*. ⑧ (44 CDs + ②) 479 7090

DEUX-ELLES

Debussy Réverie. *Parham/Jennings*. ③ ② DXL1174

DIVINE ART

Bach, JS Kybd Partitas. *Boyle*. ⑆ ② ZDA50601

Beethoven Diabelli Vars (r1989). *Boyle*. ⑆ ② ZDA50502

Parker, J Travelling Light – Wks. *Turner/Christensen/Solem Qt/Simpson, R & J*. ⑆ DDA25146

Various Cpsrs Mind Music. *Jordan/Marsh/Northern CO/Barlow*. ③ ② DDA25138

LA DOLCE VOLTA

Schumann Kreisleriana. Fantasie. *Collard*. ⑆ LDV30

DYNAMIC

Donizetti Olivo e Pasquale (pp2016). *Sols/Scala Academy Orch/Sardelli*. ⑆ ② CDS7758

Marais. Sainte-Colombe Viole en bourrasque – Wks for Basse de viole. *Biordi*. ⑆ CDS7783

FARAO

Holst Chbr Wks. *Ens Arabesques*. ⑆ B108098

GEA NEW

Vodenitcharov Ribbon of Möbius. *Ens Intercontemporain*. ⑆ GD395

Various Cpsrs Life in Music – Op Arias. *Ghiuselev*. ⑆ GD397

GENUIN

Bach, JS. Donatoni. Gershwin Rasch. Arcis Sax Qt/Mikami/Stapleton. ⑆ GEN17466

Beethoven. Schumann, C & R Pf Passion. *Fischer, C*. ⑆ GEN17464

Various Cpsrs Kind of Jazz – Wks for Cl & Pf. *Benda, F & S*. ⑆ GEN17465

Various Cpsrs Short Stories – Encore Wks for Vc & Pf. *Schumann, M/Klett*. ⑆ GEN17458

GLOSSA	glossamusic.com
Beethoven Missa solemn. <i>Sols incl Sampson & Wilson Johnson/Cappella Amsterdam/Orch of the 18th Century/Reuss.</i> GCD921124	
Monteverdi Orfeo. <i>Venexiana/Cavina.</i> GCD920941	
Vecchi Requiem. <i>Graindelavoix/Schmelzer.</i> GCDP32113	
GRAND PIANO	
Rääts Cpte Pf Sons, Vol 1. <i>Horvath, N.</i> GP765	
Roslavets Cpte Wks for Solo Pf. <i>Andryushchenko.</i> GP743/4	
HARMONIA MUNDI	harmoniamundi.com
Monteverdi Madrigali & altri canti. <i>Arts Florissants/Christie.</i> HMX290 8772/5	
Pergolesi Stabat mater. <i>Crowe/Mead/Nuova Musica/Bates.</i> HMM90 7589	
Ravel Daphis & Chloé. <i>Siècles/Roth.</i> HMM90 5280	
Schubert Pf Duets. <i>Staier/Melnikov.</i> HMM90 2227	
Schubert Pf Sons, D664 & 960. <i>Perianes.</i> HMM90 2282	
Various Cpsrs Pange lingua. <i>Ch of Clare Coll, Cambridge/Ross.</i> HMM90 7688	
HYPERION	hyperion-records.co.uk
Bruch Stg Qnts. Octet. <i>Nash Ens.</i> CDA68168	
Medtner. <i>Rachmaninov</i> Pf Concs. <i>Hamelin/LPO/Jurowski.</i> CDA68145	
Mozart Vn Sons, Vol 3. <i>Ibragimova/Tiberghien.</i> CDA68143	
Various Cpsrs Music for the Hundred Years War. <i>Binchois Consort/Kirkman.</i> CDA68170	
JCW	
Williams, J On the Wing – Gtr Wks. <i>Williams, J.</i> JCW4	
LPO	lpo.co.uk
Beethoven Sym No 3. Fidelio – Ov (pp2014-15). <i>LPO/Jurowski.</i> LPO0096	
MELODIYA	melodysu
Tchaikovsky Children's Album. Seasons. <i>Osetlinskaya.</i> MELCD100 2488	
Various Cpsrs Anthology of Russian Sym Wks, Vol 1. <i>Various artists.</i> (56 CDs) MELCD100 2480	
Various Cpsrs Low Strings. <i>Poltavsky/Rumyantsev/Krotenko.</i> MELCD100 2476	
MIRARE	mirare.fr
Buxtehude Trio Sons. <i>Réveuse/Bolton, F/Perrot.</i> MIR303	
Honegger Roi David. <i>Sols/Ens Vocal, Lausanne/Suisse Romande Orch/Reuss.</i> MIR318	
Various Cpsrs Entrez dans la danse.... <i>Quéfelec.</i> MIR320	
MSR CLASSICS	msrcd.com
Liszt Songs. <i>Brecher/Koenig.</i> MS1538	
MUSIQUE EN WALLONIE	musiwallug.ac.be
Jongen Wks for Vc & Orch. <i>Demarquette/Liège RPO/Arming.</i> MEW1785	
NAXOS	naxos.com
Borodin. Taneyev Pf Trios. <i>Delta Pf Trio.</i> 8 573561	
Brahms Stg Qt No 3. Cl Qnt. <i>Campbell/New Zealand Qt.</i> 8 573454	
Harrison, L Vn Conc. Grand Duo. Double Music. <i>Fain/Boriskin/PostClassical Ens/Gil-Ordóñez.</i> 8 559825	
Hindemith Marienleben. <i>Harnisch/Schulze.</i> 8 573423	
Hosokawa Raven. <i>Hellekant/United Insts of Lucilin/Kawase.</i> 8 573733	
Novák In the Tatra Mountains. Lady Godiva Ov. Eternal Longing. <i>Buffalo PO/Falletta.</i> 8 573683	
Ravel Antar. Shéhérazade. <i>Druet/Lyon Nat Orch/Slatkin.</i> 8 573448	
Scarlatti, D Cpte Kybd Sons, Vol 18. <i>Monteiro, S.</i> 8 573611	
Schubert Pf Vars. <i>Yontov.</i> 8 573707	
Shostakovich Chbr Sym, Op 73a. Sym for Stgs, Op 118a (both arr Barshai). <i>Kiev Virtuosi/Yablonsky.</i> 8 573601	
Torroba Gtr Concs, Vol 2. <i>Romero, P/Coves, V/Extremadura SO/Coves, M.</i> 8 573503	
Various Cpsrs Anniversary Collection. <i>Various artists.</i> (30 CDs) 8 503293	

NMC	nmcrc.co.uk
Elias Electra Mourns. <i>Sols/Psappha/Kok/Britten Sinf/Rundell.</i> NMCD235	
Skempton Rime of the Ancient Mariner. <i>Williams, R/Yates/BCMG/Brabbins.</i> NMCD234	
NOVUM	newcollegechoir.com
Petter Ablaze With Light – Chor Wks. <i>Rose Sgrs/Foggitt/Plummer.</i> NCR1391	
OEHMS	oehmsclassics.de
Cesti Orontea. <i>Sols/Frankfurt Op & Museum Orch/Bolton.</i> OC965	
Hassler Org Wks. <i>Kelemen, J.</i> OC658	
Various Cpsrs Sagenhaft!: 25 Jahre Singer Pur. <i>Singer Pur.</i> OC1853	
ONDINE	ondine.net
Körvits Moorland Elegies. <i>Estonian Philh Chbr Ch/Tallinn CO/Joost.</i> ODE1306-2	
ONYX	onyxclassics.com
Vaughan Williams Sym Nos 3 & 4. <i>RLPO/Manze.</i> ONYX4161	
ORFEO	orfeo-internationale.de
Beethoven. Strauss, R. Wagner Op Arias & Scenes (pp1997-2014). <i>Botha/Vienna St Op.</i> C906 171B	
PAN CLASSICS	
Jommelli Passione di Gesù Cristo. <i>Berlin Baroque Academy/De Marchi.</i> PC10376	
Lenzi. Mozart Sacred Wks in Lombardy 1770-80. <i>Mazzulli/Ens Autarena/Scandelli.</i> PC10364	
PAVLÍK	pavlikrecords.sk
Various Cpsrs Solo Vn Wks. <i>Pala.</i> PA0150-2-131	
Various Cpsrs Wks for Five-Stg Milanolo Vn. <i>Pala.</i> PA0151-2-131	
PENTATONE	pentatonemusic.com
Brahms Stg Qnts. <i>WDR SO, Cologne, Chbr Plyrs.</i> PTC5186 663	
Haydn Sym Nos 53, 64 & 96. <i>Oregon SO/Kalmar.</i> PTC5186 612	
Messiaen AKOKA: Reframing Messiaen's Quartet for the End of Time. <i>Krakauer/Haimovitz/Crow/Burleson/Socalled.</i> PTC5186 560	
PIANO CLASSICS	piano-classics.com
Bortkiewicz Pf Wks. <i>Gintov.</i> PCL0120	
Lyapunov Études d'exécution transcendante. <i>Maltempo.</i> PCL0124	
PRAGA DIGITALS	pragadigitals.com
Bruckner Sym No 4 Wagner Parsifal – Good Friday Music (pp1951). <i>VPO/BPO/Furtwängler.</i> DS0350 130	
Dvořák Serenades (r1965/98). <i>Czech Nonet/ASMF/Marriner.</i> PRD250 371	
Shostakovich Stg Qts Nos 4, 6 & 9 (bp1966). <i>Borodin Qt.</i> PRD250 331	
PROPRIUS	proprius.com
Paganini Cpte Wks for Vn/Va, Vc & Gtr. <i>Sparf/Brantelid/Härenstam.</i> PRCD2078	
QUARTZ	quartzmusic.com
Schnauber Death & Waltzes. <i>Russian Stg Orch/Rachlevsky.</i> QT22120	
REFERENCE RECORDINGS	referencerecordings.com
Various Cpsrs ¡Viva Segovia! – Gtr Wks. <i>Pérez.</i> FR723	
REGENT	regent-records.co.uk
Beethoven. Hummel. Mozart Enlightenment Influence – Org Wks. <i>Quinn.</i> REGCD476	
RESONUS	resonusclassics.com
Various Cpsrs American Voices. <i>St Thomas Ch, New York/Scott.</i> RES10187	
Various Cpsrs Excellency of Hand – English Va da gamba Sons. <i>Smith, R/Pandolfo.</i> RES10186	
RICERCAR	outhere-music.com/ricercar
Monteverdi. Rossi Balli & Sonate. <i>Clematis/Wilder.</i> RIC377	
RONDEAU PRODUCTION	rondeau.de
Bach, JS St John Passion. <i>Sols/St Thomas's Boys' Ch/Leipzig Gewandhaus Orch/Biller.</i> ROP4050/51	
Kiel Requiem. <i>Ensemblerlino Vocale/Baek/Stoffels.</i> ROP6141	
Various Cpsrs Orgs of the Thomaskirche, Leipzig. <i>Böhme.</i> ROP6117	

RUBICON	
Various Cpsrs Before the Ending of the Day: Wks for Choral Evening Prayer. <i>Exon Sgrs/Wilberforce.</i> RCD1004	
SIGNUM	signumrecords.com
Haydn Seasons. <i>Sampson/Ovenden/Foster-Williams/Gabrieli Consort & Plyrs/McCreesh.</i> SIGCD480	
Mahler Cpte Sym. <i>Philh Orch/Maazel.</i> SIGCD363	
Shostakovich Preludes & Fugues. <i>Donohoe.</i> SIGCD396	
SOLO MUSICA	
Bach, JS. <i>Ysaÿe</i> Vn Battle – Solo Vn Wks. <i>Draganov.</i> SM267	
Kunets Dedication – Sym Wks. <i>Wroclaw Score Orch/Sinf Varsovia/Holdridge.</i> SM259	
Various Cpsrs Bach & Friends – Solo Vc Wks. <i>Revaz.</i> SM257	
SONO LUMINUS	sonoluminus.com
Various Cpsrs Unbound. <i>Jasper Qt.</i> DSL92212	
SONY CLASSICAL	
Brahms Pf Wks, Opp 76, 117 & 118. <i>Volodos.</i> 88875 13019-2	
Mahler Lied von der Erde. <i>Kaufmann/VPO/Nott.</i> 88985 38983-2	
Mozart In Havana – Pf Concs Nos 21 & 23. <i>Havana Lyceum Orch/Dinerstein.</i> 88985 38244-2	
Schmidt Sym No 2 Strauss, R Intermezzo – Dreaming by the Fireside. <i>VPO/Bychkov.</i> 88985 35552-2	
Tchaikovsky Serenade for Stgs. Orch Wks. <i>Metamorphosen Berlin/Schmidt.</i> 88985 42224-2	
Telemann Holder Friede, heil'ger Glaube. <i>Sols/Bavarian Rad Ch & Chbr Philh/Goebel.</i> 88985 37387-2	
Various Cpsrs Chicago SO Recs. <i>Chicago SO/Ozawa.</i> 88985 39210-2	
Various Cpsrs RCA Victor Recs. <i>Schnabel.</i> 88985 38971-2	
STONE RECORDS	stonerecords.co.uk
Various Cpsrs Heatwave – Wks for Fl, Ob & Pf. <i>Bausor/Bates/Lepper.</i> 5060192 780710	
SUPRAPHON	supraphon.com
Bach, JS Hpd Concs (r1966-68). <i>Růžicková/Prague Chbr Sols/Neumann, V.</i> SU4222-2	
Debussy. Ravel. <i>Sluka</i> Impressions – Wks for Ob & Hp. <i>Veverka/Englichová.</i> SU4212-2	
Dvořák Songs. <i>Breslik/Pechanec.</i> SU4215-2	
Tomášek Wks from 18th-Century Prague – Fp Wks. <i>Matějová.</i> SU4223-2	
SWR MUSIC	swrmusic.com
Various Cpsrs Vendredis. <i>Szymanowski Qt.</i> SWR19034CD	
TACTUS	tactus.it
Bossi Cpte Org Wks, Vol 12. <i>Macinanti/Farris/Perera.</i> TC862790	
Cortellini Masses. <i>Various artists.</i> TC560380	
WERGO	wergo.de
Sora Wechselspiele – Wks for Sgrs & Insts. <i>Sun/Sora/Various artists.</i> WER7350-2	
DVD & BLU-RAY	
ACCENTUS	
Beethoven Sym Nos 6 & 7. <i>Leipzig Gewandhaus Orch/Blomstedt.</i> ACC20413 ; ACC10413	
ARTHAUS MUSIK	
Bruckner Sym Nos 4, 5, 7, 8 & 9 (pp2006-12). <i>Cleveland Orch/Welser-Möst.</i> 2 37758 ; 109 313	
DYNAMIC	dynamic.it
Donizetti Olivo e Pasquale (pp2016). <i>Sols/Scala Academy Orch/Sardelli.</i> 2 37758 ; 57758	
NAXOS	naxos.com
Handel Messiah. <i>Sols/Salzburg Bach Ch/Bach Consort, Vienna/Dubrovsky.</i> 2 110387 ; NBD0061	

REVIEWS INDEX

A Adès Asyla, Op 17 46 Brahms, Op 21 46 Polaris (Voyage for Orchestra 46 Tevot 46 Alwyn Blackdown 61 String Quartets – Nos 10-12 66 Austin Spring 61	B Bach, JS Cantata No 119 – Overture; Cantata No 194 – Overture 46 Das wohltemperirte Clavier, BWV846-893 76 Goldberg Variations, BWV988 76 Keyboard Concerto, BWV1057 46 Mass in B minor 90 Orchestral Suites – No 1, BWV1066; No 3, BWV1068; No 4, BWV1069 46 St John Passion 90, 91 St Matthew Passion 44 Baksa Viola Pannonica 63 Bantock The Witch of Atlas 61 Beethoven Bagatelles, Op 126 77 Choral Fantasia 120 Coriolan – Overture 120 Egmont Overture 121 Fidelio – Overture 120 Leonore No 3 Overture 121 Missa solemnis 120 Overtures: Coriolan, Op 62; Egmont, Op 84; Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus, Op 43; Die Ruinen von Athen, Op 113; Zur Namensfeier, Op 115 47 Piano Concerto No 3 120 Septet, Op 20 120 String Quartet No 16 – two movements 120 Symphonies – Nos 1-9 120 Symphonies – Nos 4 & 7 47 Symphony No 2 47 Symphony No 6, 'Pastoral' – 'Merry Gathering of Country Folk' 62 The Creatures of Prometheus 120 Violin Sonata No 9, 'Kreutzer', Op 47 (arr Franchomme) 66 Beethoven/Liszt Symphony No 3, 'Eroica', Op 55 (\$464 No 3) 77 Bellini Norma – Overture 62 Berlioz Symphonie fantastique 49 Bernstein Piano Sonata 87	Bizet Les pêcheurs de perles 110 Boiti Mefistofele – Prelude to the Prologue 62 Bowden Sudden Light 65 Brahms Four Ballades, Op 10 77 German Requiem 120 Handel Variations 120 Piano Concerto No 2 120 Piano Quartet No 2 67 Four Piano Pieces, Op 119 77 Two Rhapsodies, Op 79 77 Symphony No 1 120 Symphonies – Nos 3 & 4 49 The Complete Symphonies 50 Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op 35 77 Three Violin Sonatas 66 Braunfels Ulenspiegel 110 Bruch Romanze, Op 85 63 Bruckner Symphony No 2 (1872 version, ed Carragan) 50 Symphony No 6 (ed Haas) 50 Bruneau L'attaque du Moulin 121 C Caccini, F La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola di Alcina 111 Catalani La Wally – Act 3, Introduction 62 Cherubini Les Abencérages 121 Chopin Four Ballades 78 Fantaisie, Op 49 78 Piano Sonata No 2 78 Preludes, Op 28 78 Clérambault Magnificat, C136 92 Monstra te esse matrem, C132 92 Motet à 3 voix tiré du Psaume 76, C130 92 Motet pour la canonisation de Saint Pie, C150 92 O piissima, o sanctissima mater, C135 92 Panis angelicus, C131 92 Salve regina, C114 92 Sub tuum praesidium, C104 92 Copland Piano Sonata 87 Corelli Concerto grossi, Op 6 – No 4; No 8, 'Christmas Concerto' 46 Crane Air 69	Hugo Pine 69 Jurgen Hip 69 Klavierstücke opus 84 or 85, 'Keith Miller Project' 69 Len Valley Us 69 Piano Quintet 69 Processional 69 Trio for Ros and Peter 69 Czerny Prelude and Fugue, Op 607 78 Twenty Short Voluntaries, Op 698 78 Twelve Introductory or Intermediate Voluntaries, Op 627 78 D Danzi Concertino, Op 47 62 Fantasy on 'Là ci darem la mano' 62 Debussy Études 79 Fêtes galantes – Set 2 92 Première rhapsodie 73 Trois Chansons de Bilitis 92 Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé 92 Devienne Flute Concertos – Nos 5-8 51 Donizetti Ave Maria 92 Credo 92 Messa di Gloria 92 Ugo, conte di Parigi – Overture 62 Doppler, F & K Chamber works for flute 72 Draeseke Clarinet Sonata 72 Quintet for horn, piano and strings 72 Dvořák Piano Trios – No 3, Op 65 B130; No 4, 'Dumky', Op 90 B166 69 F Farina Canzon detta la Bolognesa 73 Canzon detta la Marina 73 Sonata detta la Farina 73 Sonata detta la Franzosina 73 Sonata detta la Desperata 73 Sonata detta la Fiamma 73 Fauré Cinq Mélodies 'de Venise', Op 58/ La chanson d'Eve, Op 95 92 Françaix Clarinet Concerto 73 Theme and Variations 73 Trio for clarinet, viola and piano 73 Franck Violin Sonata (arr Delsart) 66 Frantz Fantasia Frantz 73 Fricker Adagio and Scherzo 69 String Quartets – No 1, Op 8; No 2, Op 20; No 3 69	G Gardiner, HB A Berkshire Idyll 61 Giordano Siberia – Act 2, Prelude 62 Glass Études – selection 80 Glassworks – Opening 80 The Hours – Escape!; Morning Passages 51 Violin Concerto 51 Violin Sonata 51 Glinka Variations – on an Original Theme; on a Theme from the Opera 'Faniska' by Cherubini; on Two Themes from the Ballet 'Chao-Kang'; on a Theme from 'Die Zauberflöte' by Mozart; on the Romance 'Banetta sia la madre'; on the Russian Folksong 'Sredi doliny rovnyyya' (In the shallow valley); on a Theme from the Opera 'I Capuleti e i Montecchi' by Bellini; on the Song 'The Nightingale' by Alexandr Alyabyev 80 Variazioni brillianti on a Theme from the Opera 'Anna Bolena' by Donizetti 80 Grovez Sarabande et Allegro 73 Gurney A Gloucestershire Rhapsody 61 H Halvorsen Violin Concerto, Op 28 53 Handel Arianna in Creta – Bell'idol amato/ Agrippina – Ogni vento ch'al porto lo spinga; Pensieri, voi mi tormentate! 112 Alcina – Ah, mio cor, schernito sei; Tormami a vagheggiar" 112 Giulio Cesare in Egitto – Non disperar, chi sa?; Se pietà me non senti 112 Rinaldo – Lascia ch'io pianga 112 Rodelinda – Io t'abbraccio 112 Theodora 112 Theodora, HWV68 – To thee, thou glorious son of worth; With darkness deep, as is my woe 112 Harrison, L Largo ostinato 87 Piano Sonata No 3 87 Hawes Be still 93 Beatitudes 93 The Edenham Eucharist – The Lord's Prayer 93 Let Us Love 93 Peace Beyond Thought 93 Quanta Qualia 93 Revelation 93 The Word 93	Haydn Symphonies – No 8, 'Le soir'; No 84 53 Violin Concerto No 3 53 Hosokawa Études I-VI 79 Hvoslef Bel canto 70 Inventiones I-III 70 Kirkeduo 70 Kvartoni 70 Sextet (Post) 70 I Ives Orchestral Set No 2 53 Symphonies – No 3, 'The Camp Meeting'; No 4 53 The Celestial Railroad 87 Three-Page Sonata 87 K Kortekangas Migrations 99 L Leighton Complete Organ Works 80 Leoncavallo I Medici – Act 1, Prelude; Act 3, Prelude 62 Pagliacci – Intermezzo 62 Ligeti Cello Concerto 55 Chamber Concerto 55 Melodien 55 Piano Concerto 55 Liszt Angiolin dal biondo crin, S269 SACD 95 Années de pèlerinage – année 2: Italie, S161 – Sposalizio; Il penseroso; Canzonetta del Salvatore Rosa; Sonetto 104 del Petrarca 82 Bagatelle sans tonalité, S216a 83 Comment, disaient-ils, S276 95 Drei Lieder aus Schillers Wilhelm Tell, S292 95 Enfant, si j'étais roi, S283 95 Fantasie über Themen aus Mozarts Figaro und Don Giovanni, S697 82 Go not, happy day, S335 95 Grande fantaisie sur des thèmes de l'opéra Niobe de Pacini, S419 82 Gretchen, S513 83 Ihr Glocken von Marling, S328 95 Jugendglück, S323 95 Kling leise, mein Lied, S301 95 La lugubre gondola, S200/1 83 Nuages gris, S199 83 Oh! quand je dors, S282 95 Rémiscences de Don Juan, S418 82 Rémiscences de La Juive, S409a 82 S'il est un charmant gazon, S284 95 Tre Sonetti di Petrarca, S270 95
---	---	--	--	---	--

Valse oubliée, S215/2 83	Piano Sonata No 14, K457 DVD 83	Vocalise 72	Stamitz, C	Clarinet Concerto No 7 62	Weber	Andante and Rondo ungarese 63
Liszt, orch Doppler, F	Symphony No 40 120	Ravel	Stamitz, J	Clarinet Concerto 62	Weinberg	Chamber Symphonies – Nos 1-4 60
Hungarian Rhapsodies – Nos 1-6 72	Violin Sonatas – No 12, K27; No 16, K31; No 17, K296; No 23, K306; No 32, K454; No 36, K547 70	Reger	Strauss, E	Wien über alles, Op 172 62		Piano Quintet, Op 18 (arr Pushkarev/Kremer) 60
M	N	Rossini	Strauss, R	Sullivan	Wert	Amen, amen dico vobis 100
Magnard	Nau	Rossi, M	Ariadne auf Naxos – Symphony Suite (arr D Wilson Ochoa) 58	Songs – various 100		Ascendente Jesu in naviculum 100
Guercoeur 121	Fantasia Steffan Nau 73	Rust	Eine Alpensinfonie, Op 64 58	Suppé	Wolf	Deus iustus, et salvans 100
Mahler	Nielsen	Three Sonatas 85	Le bourgeois gentilhomme – Suite, Op 60 58	Dichter und Bauer – Overture 62		Egressus Jesus 100
Piano Quartet 67	Complete Organ Works 84	Variations on the Song 'Blühe liebes Veilchen' 85	Metamorphosen 58	Svensen		Gaudete in Domino 100
Matthews, D	Violin Concerto, Op 33 53	S	Schlagobers, Op 70 – Tanz des Kaffees; Träumerei; Finale 62	Romance 53		Hoc enim sentite in vobis 100
Complete Piano Trios 70	Nilsson	Saint-Saëns	Symphonia domestica, Op 53 58			O altitudo divitiarum 100
Journeying Songs, Op 95 70	Violin Concerto 56	Cello Concerto No 1 57	Tod und Verklärung, Op 24 58			O Crux ave, spes unica 100
Mawby	O	Cello Sonatas – Nos 2 & 3 57	Violin Sonata, Op 18 71			Peccavi super numerum 100
Alma redemptoris mater 95	O'Regan	Clarinet Sonata 73				Quiescat vox tua a ploratu 100
Ave Maria 95	A Celestial Map of the Sky 56	Scarlatti, A				Saule 100
Ave regina caelorum 95	Chaâbi 56	Messa Clementina 97				Virgo Maria hodie ad coelum 100
Ave verum corpus 95	Fragments from Heart of Darkness 56	O magnum mysterium 97				Vox in Rama audita est 100
Cantate 95	Latent Manifest 56	Salve regina 97				Wolf
Caro mea 95	Raï 56	Schönherr				Auf dem See 101
Celtic Blessing 95	P	Praterfahrt anno 1880, Op 92a 62				Drei Gedichte von Michelangelo 101
Crux fidelis 95	Palestrina	Tänze aus Österreich, Op 25 62				Erster Verlust 101
Liverpool Mass – Gloria 95	Surrexit pastor bonus 97	Schubert				Der Fischer 101
Magnificat octavi toni 95	Tu es Petrus 97	Winterreise DVD 99				Gretchen vor dem Andachtsbild der Mater dolorosa 101
Magnificat primi toni 95	Ponchielli	Schubert/Busoni				Sechs Gedichte von Scheffel, Mörike, Goethe und Kerner 101
O sacrum convivium 95	La Gioconda – Dance of the Hours 62	Five German Dances with Seven Trios and Coda, D90 86				Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme 101
Pater noster 95	Poulenc	Five Minuets with Six Trios, D89 86				Sehnsucht 101
Placare Christe servulis 95	Ave verum corpus 96	Overtures – D26; D470; D556; D590; D591; D648 86				Susdens Vogel 101
Psalms 150 95	Clarinet Sonata 73	Der Teufel als Hydraulic, D4 – Overture 86				Die Tochter der Heide 101
Regina caeli 95	Litanies à la Vierge Noir 96	Schulhoff				Z
Regina caeli a 4 95	Mass 96	Hot-Sonate 72				Ziehrer
The Reproaches 95	Quatre motets pour le temps de Noël 96	Schumann				Hereinspaziert!, Op 518, Weana Mad'ln, Op 388 62
Salve regina 95	Quatre motets pour un temps de pénitence 96	Kreisleriana, Op 16 86				Collections
Salve regina a 8 95	Salve regina 96	Fantasie, Op 17 DVD 83				Philippe Jaroussky – 'La Storia di Orfeo' 116
Mayr	Un soir de neige 96	Four Fugues, Op 72 86				BBC National Orchestra of Wales – 'British Tone Poems, Vol 1' 61
Agnus Dei 92	Prokofiev	Four Marches, Op 76 86				The Binchois Consort – 'Music for the 100 Years' War' 102
Sanctus 92	Chout 121	Four Piano Pieces, Op 32 86				John Finucane; Elisaveta Blumine – 'French Holidays' 73
Medtner	Cinderella 121	Paganini Studies – Op 3; Op 10 86				Thomas Hampson – 'Tides of Life' 103
Piano Concerto No 2 56	On the Dnieper 121	Thema mit Variationen, 'Geistervariationen', WoO24 DVD 83				Thomas Hobbs – 'Orpheus' Noble Strings' 103
Melli	Romeo and Juliet – second suite 121	Three Sonatas for the Young, Op 118 86				The Orlando Consort – 'Beneath the Northern Star' 102
Il Ciarlino Capriccio Chromatico 73	The Prodigal Son 121	Toccata, Op 7 86				Andreas Ottensamer – 'New Era' 62
Mendelssohn	The Stone Flower 121	Variations on a Theme by Beethoven, WoO31 86				Gennady Rozhdestvensky – 'Prokofiev ballets' 121
A Midsummer Night's Dream – Overture, Op 21; Incidental Music, Op 61 (excs) 95	Violin Sonata No 2 71	Violin Sonata No 1 – Allegretto 66				Salisbury Cathedral Choir – 'The Masque of Moments' 102
Monteverdi	Puccini	Schütz				La Scala Philharmonic Orchestra – 'Overtures, Preludes and Intermezzi' 62
Madrigals: Books 7 & 8 – selection 96	Edgar – Act 4, Prelude 62	Symphoniae sacrae I 99				Leila Schayegh – 'Sonate e Canzoni' 73
Montgeroult	Madama Butterfly – Intermezzo 62	Seabourne				Michael Sieg; Angelika Merkle – 'Dialogue' 73
Complete Course for the Instruction of the Pianoforte – 12 Études 83	Turandot DVD 115	Steps: An Anthology for Piano, Vol 1 86				Various artists – 'From Melba to Sutherland - Australian Singers on Record' 121
Piano Sonata No 9, Op 5 No 3 83	Purcell	Steps, Vol 5 – Sixteen Scenes Before a Crucifixion 86				Various artists – 'L'Art Français du Chant' 121
Mozart	Dido and Aeneas – Thy hand, Belinda...When I am laid in earth 112	Sibelius				Vienna Symphony Orchestra – 'Frühling in Wien' 62
Bella mia fiamma...Resta, oh cara, K528 113	Evening Hymn, Z193 97	Finlandia, Op 26 99				Vorarlberg Symphony Orchestra – 'Viola Concertos' 63
Così fan tutte – Ei parte...Per pietà, ben mio; Temerari! Sortite!... Come scoglio; Una donna a quindici anni 113	Hear my prayer, O Lord, Z15 97	Kullervo, Op 7 99				Nathan Williamson – 'Great American Sonatas' 87
Don Giovanni – Ah fuggi il traditor; In quali eccessi...Mi tradi quell' alma; Non me lo credi?... Batti, batti, o bel Masetto 113	I was glad, Z19 97	Skog				
Don Giovanni – Batti, batti, o bel Masetto (arr Stephan Koncz) 62	Jehova, quam multi sunt hostes mei, Z135 97	Violin Concerto No 1 56				
Fantasia, K475 DVD 83	Morning Hymn, Z198 97					
La clemenza di Tito 113	O God, thou art my God, Z35 97					
Lieder – various 96	O sing unto the Lord, Z44 97					
Misera, dove son!, K369 113	Remember not, O Lord, Z50 97					
Mitridate, re di Ponto – Se viver non degg'io (arr Stephan Koncz) 62	Te Deum, Z232 97					
Le nozze di Figaro – Overture; Giunse alfin il momento...Deh vieni non tardar; Non so più cosa son; Porgi amor; Voi che sapete 113	Voluntary, Z720 97					
	R					
	Rachmaninov					
	Piano Concerto No 3 56					

Rosie Millard

How the author, journalist and Chair of Hull UK City of Culture 2017 has made music such a rich part of her home life

I remember going to the Ernest Read concerts for children at the Royal Festival Hall in the 1970s with my mother. The orchestra would play Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony and explain it, or we'd hear *Carnival of the Animals*, or *Night on the Bare Mountain*, and it was a real treat. I took my own children recently to a very similar event there. It was that wonderful feeling when you go to a concert hall and it looks empty – but only because half of the audience are so small that their heads don't go over the back of the chairs. That's just so heart-stopping.

I encouraged my children to learn music. One of my sons wanted to learn the violin, and started from the age of four. Clive Gillinson, when he left the LSO to run Carnegie Hall, left behind a bursary for two children educated in Islington or Hackney who played strings, and the deal was that you got a year's mentoring with a member of the LSO, and some money so you could buy a proper instrument. And my son won this! It actually did change his life. He was so grasped by the honour of it, he got a music place at secondary school, he's in two orchestras now – he's a big strapping 17-year-old, and he loves his violin. If I ever meet Clive Gillinson, I'm going to give him a huge kiss – I cannot overemphasise what an impact it made on my son. A proper legacy.

There is a society in which enthusiastic amateurs who play in string quartets practise in people's homes. So I said, 'Please can we have one!', and for about three years we had a quartet playing in our house every Tuesday night. It was absolutely amazing. What I used to love was that you could hear hysterical laughter coming from the room, so it encouraged my children to understand that there is huge enjoyment in the experience of being in an ensemble. One wonderful time, they said, 'Right, we're going to get you guys to play' – because I had a cellist and two violin players among my children – so they got the parts to *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, and they all went in and played. I sat on the stairs outside and phoned my father – I said, 'Listen to this, *listen* to this, it's your grandchildren playing!' It was so overwhelming.

The other brilliant thing that happened is that Kings Place opened literally four minutes' walk from our house. I was once encouraged to participate in the celebrity Christmas coffee morning there, run by a lovely woman called Lucy Parham. She said, 'We're doing Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album*, and we're each going to play one.' Gosh, it was so awful. It was probably Grade 3 in difficulty, so it was completely within my grasp, but my courage just deserted me. I am really bomb-proof in performing, I did drama at university, I can speak to thousands of people without



THE RECORD I COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT

'Schubert: The Trout'

Featuring Perlman, Zukerman, Du Pré, Mehta, Barenboim
Christopher Nupen Films **DVD** (11/05th)

I saw this documentary with my son, who found it was a glimpse into a world where music was cool and glamorous.

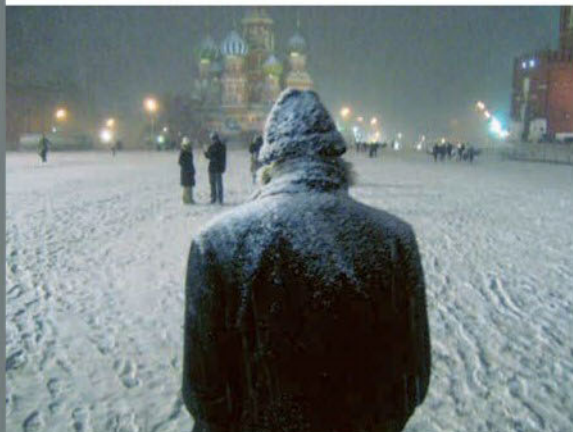
notes on stage, I've reported live for *BBC News at Ten* from the Oscars...but playing the piano, oh my goodness. My brain went into three pieces, my fingers were doing one thing, my eyes were looking at the music, and the rest of my consciousness was somewhere on the ceiling. I got stuck in the middle of the piece, I couldn't finish it, and I had to stop. I apologised, there was warm laughter, and I did then finish it. But it was a salutary experience, and it did make me really value what the professionals do.

For Hull City of Culture, we are putting on things which are celebrating local artists and creativity. We had a weekend acknowledging a woman called Ethel Leginska, a Hull-born pianist and pioneer who was a phenomenon when alive, now forgotten. She was born Ethel Liggins and gave herself a Russian sounding name to make herself sound more interesting. We have got artists and musicians in residence right across the city. Opera North has a fantastic residency in a large housing estate called Bransholme – their Christmas concert last year saw children singing *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*, in German, with the full orchestra of Opera North. It was one of the most moving things I've ever experienced. **G**

For more on Hull UK City of Culture 2017, visit hull2017.co.uk

Mieczysław Weinberg Kremerata Baltica Gidon Kremer
Chamber Symphonies Piano Quintet

ECM NEW SERIES



TIGRAN MANSURIAN

REQUIEM



ECM NEW SERIES

Momo Kodama Point and Line Debussy Hosokawa



ECM NEW SERIES

Trio Mediaeval & Arve Henriksen

Rímur

ECM



Mieczysław Weinberg
Chamber Symphonies Nos. 1–4
Piano Quintet op. 18

Kremerata Baltica
Gidon Kremer
Yulianna Avdeeva, piano
Andrei Pushkarev, percussion
Mate Bekavac, clarinet

2-CD 481 4604

Point and Line

Claude Debussy
Etudes pour piano

Toshio Hosokawa
Etudes I–VI for piano

Momo Kodama, piano

CD 481 4738

ECM NEW SERIES

Tigran Mansurian
Requiem

Dedicated to the memory of the victims
of the Armenian Genocide

RIAS Chamber Choir Berlin
Munich Chamber Orchestra
Alexander Liebreich, conductor

CD 481 4101

Trio Mediaeval and Arve Henriksen
Rímur

Chants, hymns, folk songs and
improvisations based on Icelandic,
Norwegian and Swedish sources

Anna Maria Friman: voice, Hardanger fiddle
Linn Andrea Fuglseth: voice, shruti box
Berit Opheim: voice
Arve Henriksen: trumpet

CD 481 4742

www.ecmrecords.com

Playing on our strengths to deliver first-class performance

Crafting local and international private banking solutions.

A wide range of investment, financial advisory and banking services.

Committed to giving clients the service they expect.

Longstanding partners of Benjamin Grosvenor


 facebook.com/EFGInternational

Photo: www.operaomnia.co.uk

EFG 
Private bankers

EFG is the marketing name for EFG International and its subsidiaries. EFG's global private banking network operates in around 40 locations worldwide, including Zurich, Geneva, Lugano, London, Madrid, Milan, Monaco, Luxembourg, Hong Kong, Singapore, Miami, Bogotá and Montevideo. www.efginternational.com